

# **HAND BOOK ON THE PAURI BHUINYA**

**N. PATNAIK  
S. P. ROUT  
ALMAS AU  
K. B. DEBI**

## ADIBASI

### INSTRUCTION TO AUTHORS

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All correspondence should be addressed to Dr. N. Patnaik, Director, Tribal and Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute, Bhubaneswar, Orissa.

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Editors—Shri U. C. Agarwal, I. A. S.

Dr. N. Patnaik, M. Sc., Ph. D.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### The people and their land:

The Bhuiya is one of the most widespread tribes found mostly in Bihar, Orissa, Bengal and Assam. S. C. Roy has classified the tribe into two broad sections, i. e. the southern section having Orissa as its centre and the northern section with Chota Nagpur as its Centre. The southern section of the tribe is relatively more backward than the northern section, but of all, the Pauri Bhuiyas or the Hill Bhuiyas of Orissa are the most primitive and backward.

Dalton<sup>1</sup> holds the view that the Bhuiya belong to the southern or Dravidian rather than to the northern or Kolarian race. However, judging from the racial and cultural affinities, Stirling, Grierson, Russel, Hutton and S. C. Roy<sup>2</sup> classified the tribe under the Mundari group.

#### Sections of the Tribe:

S. C. Roy recorded the following sections of the 'Bhuiya' They are—

1. Des Bhuiya or Mal Bhuiya represented mainly by Pauri Bhuiyas.
2. Parja Bhuiya or Rautali Bhuiya
3. Bathudi Bhuiya
4. Santali Bhuiya
5. Dandana Bhuiya
6. Rajkuli or Bar Bhuiya
7. Saontia Bhuiya
8. Khandak or Pawanbans Bhuiya

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1. Dalton. *Ethnology of Bengal*, 1872 p. 140

2. Roy S. C., *The Hill Bhuiyas of Orissa*, p. 26

9. Katti Bhuinya
10. Nakaiya Bhuinya
11. Hake Bhuinya
12. Dake Bhuinya
13. Rikhiassan Bhuinya
14. Musshar Bhuinya
15. Ghatwar Bhuinya

Some sections like Katti Bhuinya, Dandana Bhuinya, Hake Bhuinya, Dake Bhuinya and Nakaiya Bhuinya are just descriptive names not definitely applied to any section of the tribe, while some other sections are designated differently on the ground of their varying mythical origin. Thus the Musshar Bhuinyas believe to have descended from the younger son of a sage, whose elder son was the ancestor of the Rajwar Bhuinyas. Likewise the Rikhiassan Bhuinyas derive their name from the holy sages who were living on wild roots, fruits and tubers, and the Pawan-bans Bhuinyas claim their descent from Hanuman, the son of the wind god (Pawan). On the other hand some of the sections like Bachudi Bhuinya, Saonti Bhuinya, and Santali Bhuinya have long since attained the status of separate communities as the Bachudi, the Saonti and the Santal who share many common social and cultural traits with the Bhuinyas. Thus the sections which remain are (1) Des or Pauri Bhuinyas of Keonjhar and Bonaï who are very primitive; (2) Paik Bhuinyas of Orissa plains, who represent the quasi-militia Khondays; (3) the mixed Rajkoli Bhuinyas of Orissa, who are agriculturists; (4) the Praja or Rautali Bhuinyas of Orissa and south-eastern parts of Chota Nagpur, who are also agriculturists and agricultural labourers; and (5) the land-holding Ghatwar or Tikait Bhuinyas of Santal Pargana, Hazaribagh and Gaya.

### Myth and Origin

The name of the tribe is derived from the Sanskrit word "Bhumi" meaning land or earth and therefore the Bhuinya hold the view that they were born out of the mother earth and became

“Bhumiputra” (sons of the soil). The tribe is pronounced differently as Bhuiya, Bhuiyan and Bhuiya. The spelling used in this book is Bhuiya. The Pauri Bhuiyas, have some legends of their own regarding their origin. Some of these legends are given below.

#### Legend 1 :

When the earth was first created, there were only three sections of people. In order to decide their socio-economic status the God brought three jars duly sealed at the mouth and placed them before the people. Each section took one jar each. When opened the Bhuiya found that their jar was full of earth, and the jars containing gold and money were taken by the other two sections. As the earth fell to their side, the Bhuiya became the owner of land and cultivated it for their livelihood. From that day they were called ‘Bhuiya’ (owner of land). The relationship of the Pauri Bhuiyas to the land goes beyond its economic value. It figures strongly in their religion and entire way of life. When a Bhuiya takes oath he does so by holding a handful of earth. It is believed that if anybody tells a lie by touching earth, he is likely to die soon and become a part of the earth.

#### Legend 2 :

The legend goes like this. Formerly all sections of the tribe were of royal origin and enjoyed equal status. But some of them lost the purity of their royal blood and were degraded to a lower status. The story goes as follows:—

Long ago there lived a demon in the forest near a village called Kula in Koira area of Borsai and was called Kula Anor. He had seven daughters. One day seven Bhuiya brothers came to this part of the jungle on hunting. While following a prey they lost their way. Soon they heard the voice of women and with a hope to find their way out of the Jungle they proceeded in the direction where from the voice was

coming. Reaching the spot they found seven young and nude girls catching fish in a stream. The Bhuiyās threw seven pieces of clothes at them and after being tied properly the girls invited the seven brothers to their house for a lunch. In those days the Bhuiyās observed strict rules of austerity and refrained themselves from drinking liquor, eating fowl and pork. With the intention of marrying the boys by degrading their social status the girls served them with chicken curry hiding under cooked rice. The youngest brother was late in taking bath, and before he sat down for lunch others had started eating their share earlier. Soon after they had put some rice in their mouth they found the chicken bones hidden underneath. It was too late for them to worry over the issue as they had already lost their sacred status by eating chicken. As soon as the youngest brother arrived at the place and sat down to eat, other brothers informed him about the trick of the girls and advised him to run away to the hills. He soon left the place on horse back, but the demon girls pursued him by following the hoof prints of the horse. In order to save the boy from the clutches of the demon girls a peacock wiped out the hoof marks by its legs. Being unable to seize the boy the demon girls returned home and married the six Bhuiya brothers. They thus lost their social status and remained amidst hills and forests. The youngest brother who managed to escape became the king and as the peacock helped him he passed an order in his country forbidding peacock shooting.

A similar legend showing the royal affinity of Pauri Bhuiyās is given below :

In the long past, there were seven Bhuiya brothers. One day there arose a quarrel among themselves regarding the possession of the throne, and by mutual agreement it was decided that the throne would go to him who would be able to kill an owl sitting on a Kadam tree in one shot. The first six brothers tried one by one to shoot at the owl, but missed the game. The youngest brother, however,

succeeded in killing the owl in one shot and was thus made the king. He called himself 'Kadam Kesar' after the name of the tree on which the owl was sitting, and other six brothers continued to be called as Bhuiyos.

### Population and Distribution :

According to 1971 census the population of the Bhuiyos is estimated to be 188,212 out of which 181,863 live in rural areas and 6,349 constitute the urban population. It is not possible to estimate the exact population of the Paul Bhuiyos who have not been enumerated separately.

The districtwise population of the Bhuiyos as per the 1961 and 1971 censuses is given in the Table No. 1.

TABLE No. 1  
*District wise population of the Bhuiyos*

Sl. No.	Name of the District	Population (1961)			Population (1971)		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1	Koerghar ..	26,478	26,208	52,686	27,696	28,368	56,064
2	Sundargarh ..	22,684	22,604	45,288	28,910	29,912	58,822
3	Mayurbhanj ..	14,266	14,650	28,916	18,849	18,960	37,809
4	Sambalpur ..	10,239	10,256	20,495	10,216	11,087	21,303
5	Dhenkanal ..	1,063	1,460	2,523	2,214	2,293	4,507
6	Kalahandi ..	1,043	1,045	2,088	259	194	453
7	Balasore ..	651	615	1,266	666	733	1,401
8	Cuttack ..	636	460	996	123	127	250
9	Konarp ..	167	177	344	3,179	3,063	6,242
10	Paul ..	176	171	347	377	389	766
11	Bal-asgr ..	110	49	159	66	64	130
12	Phulbani ..	39	18	57	65	51	116
13	Ganjam ..	..	..	..	72	138	210
Total ..		79,055	77,823	156,878	92,762	95,460	1,88,212

The Table No. 1 shows that the Bhuinys are widely distributed in Orissa. But their main concentration is in the districts of Keonjhar, Sundergarh, Mayurbhanj and Sambalpur where they form 93 per cent of their total population. The primitive section of the Bhuinya community, i.e., the Pauri Bhuinys are found only in the Bhuinypirih of Keonjhar district and the Bonai Hills of Sundergarh district. The habitat of the Pauri Bhuinys lies roughly between 21° and 22° North Latitude and 85° and 86° East Longitude. The blocks of hills and elevated valleys which stretch from north to south along the Western borders of Keonjhar and joins Bonai subdivision of Sundergarh district in its north-eastern side is the homeland of the primitive Pauri Bhuinys. This tract is the watershed of the Baitarani river in the north and the Brahmani river in the south. The National High way running through the blocks of hills of the upper Keonjhar separates habitat of the Pauri Bhuinys from that of the Juangs. The Juang-Pirih with its centre at Gonaska lies to the eastern side while the Bhuinya Pirih with its centre at Banspal lies to the western side of the upper Keonjhar. Lack of road communication has kept most of the Pauri villages cut-off from the outside world. Except a few rough roads constructed by the Forest Department, there are no good all weather roads connecting to many Pauri villages. Approach to Pauri villages becomes more difficult particularly in rainy season when the hill streams are in spate. Once the jungles of the Pauri area teemed with many wild animals such as tigers, bison, elephants, bears and wild boars, but with continued practice of shifting cultivation the valuable fauna have disappeared to a great extent.

#### Education & Literacy :

According to 1971 Census 14.9 per cent of the Bhuinys were literate as compared with the corresponding figure for the tribes as a whole of the state which is 9.6 per cent and for the whole population of the state which is 29.2 per cent. As no separate figure is available for the Pauri Bhuinys, nothing can be said in figures about the level of their literacy. But from our observation and study of the community it is estimated that the literacy

# ORISSA

INDICATED DISTRIBUTION OF GEORGIAN TREES.  
(IN PERCENT OF TOTAL TREES)

*Georgian Trees*



INDICATED DISTRIBUTION OF GEORGIAN TREES

INDICATED DISTRIBUTION OF GEORGIAN TREES

DISTRICT	PERCENT OF TOTAL TREES
BHUBANESWAR	25.0
CUTTACK DISTRICT	25.0
SAMBALPUR	25.0
MAYURBHANJ	25.0
PURI	25.0
KHURDA	25.0

INDICATED DISTRIBUTION OF GEORGIAN TREES

## CHAPTER II

### LIVING CONDITIONS

The present chapter deals with the general hygienic conditions of the Pauri area, the sanitary habits of the people, the main types of diseases they suffer from, their belief regarding the agencies inflicting disease and sickness and methods of curing, food habits, methods of food preparation and dietary system. Impact of modern health facilities, peoples' response to such facilities and the concurrent achievements have also been described to show the changing attitude of the people.

#### Sanitary Habits :

As has been described in the previous chapter the Pauri Bhuiya villages are situated on high hills. Due to high altitude the people enjoy fresh and cool breeze but the presence of thick forest all around and heaps of rubbish and refuses thrown indiscriminately give birth to mosquitoes. During rainy season the home land of the Pauri Bhuinyas become malarious, but the native people who are accustomed to their habitat have developed strong resistance for malaria. Most of the Pauri villages are also surrounded by thick mango and jackfruit trees. The huts are covered with overhanging branches of these trees so that sunshine hardly falls on the huts. During rains many places become swampy. Rain water gets accumulated in puddles which become breeding-ground for flies and mosquitoes.

The Bhuiya houses are kept clean. The housewife takes care of her house which is plastered with cowdung and earth. The verandah is plastered on alternate days and the walls once in a week or fortnightly. She also cleans the cowshed every morning and throws the dung in the kitchen garden or *Sari* in which maize and mustard are grown. The courtyard and back-yard are swept clean every morning. The housewife cleans



cooking vessels which are mostly made of earth. Brass and aluminium vessels are also used in some families. Leaf-cups and leaf-plates are used for eating food and are thrown away after use.

Chicken is a nuisance in every Bhuiya house. It passes excreta every now and then indiscriminately in the courtyard and inside the house and makes the surrounding dirty. To add to this the Bhuiyas, like many other tribes, spit in every odd place. They do not have any pit or place into which to throw the rubbish and refuse. Mounds of cowdung and other rubbish are piled all around and serve as breeding-ground for flies and mosquitoes.

The Bhuiyas do not get pure drinking water. On hills the stream water is considerably pure, but this gets polluted as the water sources are used for more than one purpose. Water of a particular place may be used for washing clothes and utensils, and for bathing and drinking purposes. The water also gets dirty when the leaves fall and rot in the water. The Bhuiyas prefer to defecate near the sources of water and during rainy season the dirt is washed down and pollutes the water. There are no wells on the hills and the habit of drinking water from the polluted sources causes enteric diseases. The common complain of the Pauri Bhuiyas is stomach disorder.

In their daily habits the Bhuiyas are not so unclean. All above the age of 8 or 10 years brush their teeth with *Sai* twigs early morning before eating anything. The womenfolk brush their teeth on their way to the stream for a bath. Stream beds are usually used as latrine. Both men and women take bath regularly, the women washing their head daily. They take naked bath while allowing their cloth to dry up, and any body approaching the bathing ghat must shout or give other signals so that the women get time to cover up their nudity. Some women take bath twice daily. Use of soap is rare among the Pauri Bhuiyas. The clothes may be washed by the women ordinarily once or twice a month, and positively prior to any festive or ceremonial occasion or before visiting other villages and market places. The Pauris use ash or

soda to wash their clothes while those who afford to buy soap may use it. In the cases of ritual uncleanness arising out of birth and death cases the services of washmen are required to wash the clothes.

The Paui Bhuinyas have scanty hair growth. They shave their beards rarely and the males of older generation keep long hair which is tied as a knot at the back and those of younger generation, however, cut hair once a month. They have their own scissors and they cut each others hair. The services of a barber are required only on the occasion of shaving the head of the offender as a sort of ritual purification prescribed by the tribal council. Razor-blades and shaving sticks are also used by some young persons for occasional shaving.

The men comb their hair daily after bath, while the women do not get time to do so daily. They use bamboo combs made by men for combing hair, but now-a-days cheap plastic combs are widely used by both men and women. A woman ties her hair to a simple knot, while the girl makes an elaborate bun and decorates it with wild flowers. Now-a-days ribbons of different colours have become a fashion for the girls. *Ta* or mustard oil is used by both men and women for anointing over body and for head-dressing.

### Food :

Rice is esteemed as the ideal food by the Paui Bhuinyas. Even meat and millet without rice do not constitute a hearty meal. The Bhuinyas cultivate paddy, but their harvest is so meagre that it can hardly feed them for four or five months. To increase the stock they exchange black gram (*Biy*), niger, and mustard for paddy. The rice thus procured by exchange holds them for another two or three months. It should, however, not be misunderstood that the Bhuinyas eat rice sufficiently and continuously till the stock is exhausted. It may be noted that not all the meals are rice meals. Sufficient quantity of rice is stored for consumption during the rainy season when hard labour is put

in the agricultural operations. Ragi, *Suan*, *Guladi*, *Kangu* and other cereals grown by the Bhuinyas in the *ewiddens* also supplement rice meal.

Edible roots and tubers, vegetables and mushrooms collected from the forest supplement the Bhuinya diet to a greater extent. In fact many poor families depend mainly on forest produce. In summer season the Bhuinyas live upon jackfruit and mango which grow in abundance in the area, and during rainy season mushrooms of different varieties are eaten as the most favoured dish. During winter the forest is rich with roots and tubers which the Pauri Bhuinyas collect in plenty.

Hunting and fishing are viewed more as sports than as a source of getting food. In many areas adjoining reserve forest, wild animals are hunted occasionally. The Bhuinyas catch fish from the streams and rivers but fish and meat do not constitute their principal diet.

To conclude, the food of the Pauri Bhuinyas do not constitute routine and monotonous items, but is more varied depending on the seasonal variation and availability of food materials.

#### Methods of Food Preparation :

The Bhuinyas husk their own rice. Rice is never washed before it is cooked, and the *Pa'* (surplus water of the boiled rice) is not thrown away. It is either drunk after the meal or added to *Da'* (lentil) or meat to make it tasty. Sometimes, *Pa'* and water are added to cooked rice which is kept till it cools down and then eaten.

Most of the Bhuinyas eat rice only with salt. Some may add onion and chilly to their menu. *Da'* and curry are cooked occasionally or on special occasions. *Ahar*, *Biri*, *Mung* and *Kolaha*, are the important lentils grown by the Bhuinyas in the *ewiddens*. The lentils are boiled in water, salt and chilly are added for taste. The Bhuinyas rarely, if ever, use oil for

cooking purposes. Vegetables are boiled and spices like mustard, onion, chilly and salt may be added. Green leaves are boiled with salt only. Meat is cooked with spices and oil and *Pij* is added to serve as its juice. Fish are either fried on ember or cooked with mustard and oil.

The Pauris store mango kernels to prepare cakes. The inner kernel is made to a paste and the same is kept under running water overnight. Next morning a little salt is added to it and a cake is prepared by baking the paste on embers.

Hunting is inaugurated on the day of ceremonial hunting called *Akhar Pankhi* and the preys include deer, sambar, barking deer, hare and different kinds of birds. As hunting is not a guaranteed success, the Bhuinyas rear goat, sheep and fowl for mutton and chicken. These are sacrificed during rituals and may be slaughtered to entertain guests and relatives. The Bhuinyas never eat beef and buffalo meat.

By custom the Bhuinyas do not milk their cows. Whenever needed the milk and milk products are purchased from the milkmen who live in their midst.

To break the monotony of their diet the Pauri women prepare cakes and porridge on festive occasions. These are also used as gifts on visits to the relatives. It is also customary for the unmarried girls to offer cakes to their boy friends. Rice cakes are most common and preferred above all other types of cakes. The paste of rice flour is wrapped in *Sa/* leaves and steamed or baked to make cake. *Mandâ* (ragi) cake may be prepared by baking the paste on embers after tying it in *Sa/* leaves. *Mandâ* cake is eaten especially during rainy season when the Bhuinyas work in rains and want to keep their body warm. It is believed that *Mandâ* cakes keep the body warm. Cakes are made from green maize and the maize cakes have the best taste. Porridge is usually prepared on ceremonial occasions to offer it to the family ancestors. This is prepared by boiling rice and adding milk and molasses to make it sweet.

Roots and tubers are mostly consumed by steaming or baking on embers. The tubers which taste bitter are sliced and kept under running water over night so that the bitterness is washed away to a considerable extent. The slices are then steamed and eaten.

Fruits are generally eaten raw. Of all the fruits mango and jackfruit supplement the Bhuiya diet to a great extent. Ripe mangoes are sliced and eaten with pinches of salt and poorer families eat mango slices as a substitute for their rice meal. Ripe mangoes are also eaten to a great extent. Every Bhuiya settlement must have mango groves, but most of the mangoes are obtained from the jungle where mango trees grow wild. The juice of mango is used to make a kind of cake called *Amure* by drying the paste on a piece of mat. Jackfruits grow in abundance in Paun villages. The green jackfruits are boiled and eaten, but most of the Parus prefer to eat the ripe ones. Semi-ripen jackfruits are eaten by steaming and by roasting on embers. The seeds are eaten by roasting or by boiling.

#### Food Preservation :

The Bhuiyas hardly get any surplus food which requires to be stored for future use. The agricultural produce is barely sufficient for the whole year, and therefore the question of storing does not arise. But certain things which occasionally come in their possession in greater quantity can be preserved for future use. Meat which the Bhuiyas get by hunting may be preserved by smoking. Likewise, fish may be dried or smoked to store for future use. The Bhuiyas enjoy dried-fish more than the raw ones. Maize is stored for future use. Similarly, mango juice is preserved in the form of dried paste.

#### Daily Diet :

The adults eat twice or thrice a day, and the children eat as many times as the food supply permits. During the days of adversity and scarcity, the adults manage to

keep their body and soul together by one or two meals. A meal usually consists of cooked-rice and salt. Occasionally Dal, vegetable and green leaves, meat or fish serve as side dishes. One of the principal meals is taken at noon and the other in the evening. Some cooked-rice of the night is kept for the children to serve as their breakfast. After taking their meals the Bhuiyas drink the *Pay* extracted from the boiled rice. When rice and cereals are out of stock they subsist on roots and tubers, green vegetables and fruits.

The housewife takes care of cooking and the food is served in ear-cups made by her. The children eat proportionately more than the adults, who do not get enough to eat and manage to remain satisfied with the minimum of food.

#### Drinks and other intoxicants :

Liquor has the following uses for the Bhuiyas:—

- (i) It is taken as an intoxicant to forget the trials and tribulations of life, and to get relief from fatigue after strenuous field work.
- (ii) *Mohor* liquor is used as medicine to cure cold and headache.
- (iii) Some Bhuiyas drink liquor as a substitute for food and keep themselves fit for all hard work.
- (iv) Liquor is indispensable on ritual and festive occasions. It is offered to the deities and to the ancestral spirits to keep them in good temper and thereby solicit their favour for plenty and prosperity.
- (v) Liquor has great social value. It is customary for the Bhuiyas to entertain their guests and relatives when the latter visit them. Plenty of liquor is consumed during important festive and ceremonial occasions when large number of guests crowd their families. Important rites connected with birth, marriage and death ceremonies are performed by offering liquor to appropriate deities. Liquor is also used while deciding quarrels and conflicts.

Liquor is either prepared by the Bhuinyas themselves at home or purchased from the local merchants. The liquor vendors visit the Pauri villages and sell liquor in exchange of agricultural produce. Different varieties of liquor are taken by the Bhuinyas. They are *Mohua* liquor called *Mahuli*, rice-beer called *Pachhi*, toddy extracted from date-palms, *Salapa Ma'da* extracted from sago-palms, and liquor prepared out of cereals.

The Bhuinyas do not like to drink the rice-beer which is prepared by any other tribe and caste. Hence they brew their own liquor at home. Many of them own date-palms and sago-palms which they tap for drinking.

The Bhuinyas are habituated to smoking and chewing tobacco. Tobacco is grown in kitchen garden and is stored for the whole year. The men smoke tobacco by rolling it in *Sa/* leaf, while both men and women chew it with lime. Tobacco is an insignia of social prestige. The guests and relatives visiting Bhuinya houses are first offered tobacco and *Sa/* leaves as a token of hospitality. In their traditional youth organization the *Bandhu* (cognate) girl present tobacco to the unmarried boys as a token of their love. Children start smoking when they are as young as six or seven years of age. Young boys who earn some cash smoke *Bid* purchased from the local shops. Betel is too dear for them. Tobacco paste (*Gurakh*) is popular among the Pauris, and young women and girls are very fond of it. *Gurakh* is purchased from local weekly markets and is taken twice or thrice daily.

Tea has become a habit for many Bhuinyas, who can afford to purchase it. As the Bhuinyas do not milk their cows they do not add milk or sugar to their tea but take it raw in the morning.

### Health and Hygiene :

Most of the Bhuinyas are pretty strong and stout and their stature varies from tall to short, the majority being medium in stature. The sound physique of the Bhuinyas may be due to

the food they eat and the climate they live in. Their diet is composed of more protein than starch. The little quantity of rice which they eat is full of food value because it is hand pound and not washed before cooking so that the brown coating remains intact and the surplus rice water which remains after cooking is taken and never thrown away. The fresh green leaves and vegetables are boiled without adding much spices or oil and therefore the nutrients are not spoiled. The roots and tubers collected from the forest are eaten by the Bhuinyas mostly by roasting, and the fruits which are eaten raw are of great nutritive value. Meat, mutton, chicken and egg constitute a small proportion of their diet. Almost all the parts of an animal including the skin, brain, tongue, liver, guts and intestines are eaten by the Bhuinyas except the hairs, hoofs and the horns. The meat eaten by them does not lose its nutritive element as it is eaten either by roasting or by boiling without adding much spices and oil.

3. The Bhuinyas do not like to sit idle and they do hard out door work from dawn to dusk. They enjoy a cool and healthy climate which drives away disease and sickness from them and keeps them active.

#### Disease and their treatment :

In spite of, healthy climate of their habitat and nutritious food they take the Bhuinyas sometimes suffer from malaria stomach trouble, headache, cough and cold. The reasons they attribute for illness are untimely bath, irregularity of diet and negligence of bodily care. Besides these natural explanations they also attribute the illness to supernatural causes. The Paurs believe that certain ghosts and spirits inflict sickness if they are offended due to one reason or the other. Likewise, the ancestral spirits if not properly appeased or if their sacred tabernacle is defiled, may make their descendants to suffer. Some individuals are believed to possess "evil-eye" (*Natar*), and when they cast their look on somebody with a malicious intention the person is liable to



suffer. Sufferings may also be caused by evil spirits (*Churni* or *Masani*) or by the witches. Persons violating social taboos and committing serious offences like incest, are believed to suffer from leprosy.

The Bhuinyas donot bother to take steps for treatment of minor diseases at the primary stage of any illness. When the disease becomes serious disabling the person to carry on his daily activities steps are taken for remedy. As the Bhuinyas ascribe illness to external agencies, necessary steps are taken to appease the latter for recovery. If an illness is caused due to the visitation of some deity the help of the village priest is immediately taken. The village priest (*Churni*) offers libations and sacrifices and prays the offending deity to remove illness. In case the *Pat* (Hill) spirits are offended a vow is made to sacrifice a goat or a fowl after the sufferer is cured. To satisfy the angry ancestral spirits the Bhuinyas offer *Jau* and liquor in the *Bhitar* (sacred corner in the house where ancestral spirits live) for quick recovery. To avert the evil-eye and to neutralize the mischief caused by witches or sorcerers the services of *Raula* (Witch detector-cum-curer) are requisitioned. The *Raula* first tries to detect the offender by divination and then invokes more powerful spirits to neutralize the evil effects and cure the illness.

The following tests are employed by a *Raula* to detect the agency creating sickness.

- (1) *Measuring Reed*—Two pieces of a kind of reed each measuring nine spans in length are used for this purpose. The *Raula* utters the names of the suspected spirits or persons one by one measuring the reeds in each case. When the name of the offender is pronounced, the reeds tend to lengthen slightly beyond their actual length.
- (2) *Test by water Jug*—A brass plate (*Phai*) filled with water is brought for this purpose. A lamp with four lighted wicks are kept in the middle of the plate and a brass water jug is kept inverted over the lamp. When the name of the offender is recited the water in the plate begins to bubble and the jug is set in motion.

- (iv) *Test by a Grain-measure (Pal)*—The *Raula* keeps *Pal* (Bass grain-measure) of paddy on the floor and puts the *Pal* with its mouth down wards. A man is asked to sit on the *Pal*. When the name of the evil spirit who has caused illness is uttered the *Pal* shakes and tilts of its own accord.

After the evil spirit causing illness is found out by any of these divinations appropriate rituals are performed to propitiate it and offer sacrifices to it. The *Raula* also has a good knowledge about medicinal herbs and applies them wherever necessary. If a person suffers from frequent stomach-ache the *Bhuiyas* usually try to cure the patient by branding his belly with a hot piece of forked iron rod. In the case of epidemic the *Dihuri* offers libations to *Diharam Devta* (Sun God), *Basuki* (Earth Goddess), *Gairi* (village Goddess) and other gods and goddesses such as *Boram* and *Thakurani* and prays for help.

Neither the Pauri *Bhuiyas* believe in efficacy of modern medicine, nor the modern health and medical facilities are within their reach. Physical barriers and lack of communication to the interior areas have stood in the way of establishing dispensaries and other medical infrastructures in the Pauri area and it is mainly for this reason that they depend upon their own methods of curing illness. But those who live in close proximity to dispensary and modern medical facilities do not get medical help when wanted. Some of the reasons are that doctors are not available in some dispensaries and due care is not taken of the patients. Moreover sufficient medicines are not in stock to dispense among the patients. Added to these difficulties the doctor imposes certain food restrictions which the Pauri finds it difficult to follow. The disciplines of modern medical practices make no concessions to the tribal customs. For these reasons mainly the Pauris do not bother about modern health facilities unless any major illness endangers life.

## CHAPTER III

### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

#### Pauri Bhuiya Settlements :

As has been described in preceding pages inhospitable hill terrain and valley bottom form the homeland of the Pauri Bhuiyas. The Bhuiya settlements are located either on the table land at the hill-top, and the hill slope or in the valleys surrounded by hills and forests. The Pauri settlements and crop fields are subjected often to the depredation of wild animals who live in the surrounding forests. Jaldih, one of the study villages, is situated on an open table land of a hill of about 2,000 ft. altitude above sea-level. The village was fairly isolated, till very recently a jeepable road has been laid over the hill tract by the Orissa Forests Corporation for exploitation of timbers. There are rich Sal forests all around the village, which in fact have attracted the Forest Department to construct the jeepable tract. Tantsa, another study village is situated on the top of a hill. This village was also surrounded by thick forest and was devoid of any communication facilities till the mining operation was geared up at Tantsa. With the establishment of Tantsa township a jeepable road has been constructed connecting Tantsa and its mineral rich hills with the township. This has also led to the destruction of the surrounding forests to a greater extent.

The blocks of hills around the Pauri villages provide land for slash and burn type of cultivation. Due to non-availability of low lands, the Bhuiyas are bound to carry on shifting cultivation in the nearby hills and forests. In the Pauri country the settlements are located in such places where sufficient hill-slopes are available for shifting cultivation and thick forests are available for carry on hunting and food gathering and good perennial streams are present to provide water to the villagers.

Construction of houses does not conform to any pattern. In some cases they are built either on both sides of the main village path or are dispersed on all sides. Each family owns a courtyard

around which the huts are built. The huts face to the courtyard. The number of huts which a family owns depends upon its family size. The cow-shed is constructed on one side of the courtyard. At the back of the houses lie maize and mustard plots in the kitchen-garden where chilly, tobacco, and some vegetables are also occasionally grown. Dispersed all around and overhanging the thatched huts are the jack fruit trees, the sight of which indicates the location of a Pauri village or an abandoned village site.

The most descent and commodious hut known as *Mandeghar* in Keonjhar and *Darberghar* in Sundergarh, is usually constructed in the centre of the village. This is the dormitory house of the unmarried boys. It also serves the purpose of a guest house, council house and granary of the village. The *Changer* or circular tambourines played upon by men in dances and the drums are kept suspended with strings from pronged deer antlers fixed to the walls. In the inner portion straw packed bundles containing common stock of grains of the village youths or of the village are stored on raised wooden platform. In some villages a separate hut is constructed a little away from the village which is called *Thakuranighar*.

On one side of the *Darberghar* is installed the sacred shrine of *Gahiri Khunta*, made of a round piece of carved wooden pillar. This pillar represents the tutelary deity of the village to whom offerings are made from time to time for the well-being of the villagers. In front of the *Darberghar* lies an open and wide space called *Darbar* or the *plaza* where dances are held and the village Panchayat meets. The dormitory organization continues to have its hold in the Bhuiyapir of Keonjhar district, but it is in the process of disintegration in Sundergarh district. In Koira area many Bhuiya villages lack the *Darberghar*, though the rites associated with the dormitory organization have not completely been discarded.

The size of a Bhuiya village varies from 5 houses to 20 houses. The villages located in the plains are much bigger having in some cases more than 60 houses with population ranging 200 to 400. Jaldih village had a Bhuiya population of 140, distributed in 27

families in 1962 while it increased to 158 distributed in 25 families in 1970. The Bhuiya villages in the hills tend to be small due to the scarcity of *Podu* lands, drinking water facility, slopping terrain and non-availability of wide level ground.

Most of the Pauli villages are homogeneous except one or two *Goor* (Cow-herd) families. The latter are given shelter in Bhuiya villages to provide milk and milk-products to the Bhuiyas on important occasions. Besides, they are employed to tend to cattle of the Bhuiyas. The *Goor* houses are located at some distance from the Bhuiya settlement. In the plains and mining areas some *Kol* and *Munda* families are found in Bhuiya villages, but they always live in separate hamlets. Some big Bhuiya villages have two or more wards. For example *Patuli* has two wards, namely *Badi* and *San Patuli*. *Kadakala* situated in the Bhuiyapirih has two wards, *Upper Kadakala* and *Lower Kadakala*. The wards have no separate entity; they function as one in socio-religious matter and own their allegiance to the main village.

### Changing Village Site :

The Pauli Bhuiyas tend to change their village site for various reasons some of which are stated below—

- (1) General boredom of living in a particular place for a long time. The Pauli Bhuiyas believe that prolonged stay in one site may not bring prosperity to the villagers and just like wearing new clothes, they enjoy to shift their settlement to new sites.
- (2) As has been described earlier the Bhuiya settlements are built usually near forests so that the villagers do not have to walk long distance for *Podu* cultivation. When the jungles around a village are all exhausted the Bhuiyas shift their village to another site where they get forest lands in close proximity to practice shifting cultivation.

- (3) General calamity in a village such as successive deaths of cattle and human beings, repeated crop failure, breaking out of fire and cholera or any other epidemic in the village, frequent tiger menace, etc., force the people to abandon their old settlement and take up a new site.
- (4) If the *Gajari-Khunta* is broken or uprooted, the village site must be changed forthwith otherwise it is believed that dire misfortune may overtake the village.

Some villages have definite sites to which they shift their village on rotation basis. These sites have different names so that when the village shifts to a new site it is named after the site on which it stands. Village Jaldih, for example, has another site called Jabakadih to which the village moves when required. In absence of such definite sites, steps are taken to select new sites on the following considerations—

- (a) There should be perennial water sources in close proximity so that the villagers do not face any trouble in fetching water for domestic use. This being the most important and practical consideration, due care is taken to search for the water source before selecting a new site.
- (b) Being predominantly shifting cultivators, they tend to select such sites around which lie vast hills and forests at close proximity which can be cleared for cultivation without much strain.
- (c) The last, not the least important factor for selection of a new village site is its favourableness for habitation which is determined by several tests of omen. If it is found inauspicious or ill-omened the place is rejected for another site.

#### Testing of Omen for selection of new site :

After a site is chosen steps are taken to know if the site will be auspicious for habitation by testing of omen. The *Dihun* (village priest) after taking a bath cleans a small patch in the new site and plasters it with cowdung and water. He must

have observed continence in the previous night. The priest prays *Dharam* (Sun God), *Basumata* (Earth Goddess), *Gakhi* (village deity), *Thakurani*, *Boram*, *Pot* (deities residing in hills, forests and streams), and *Pitru* (ancestral spirits) and places a handful of husked paddy (*Abata*) on the plastered patch and puts a circle of turmeric powder around the rice pile. He then bends down and prays—

"Oh *Dharam* *Devta*, *Basumata*, *Gakhi*, *Thakurani*, *Boram*, *Pitru*, today we are placing a pile of *Abata* in your honour. Let us know if the proposed village site will be auspicious for habitation. Let all be in the best of health. Let there be enough for all to eat".

After the prayer is over the *Dihuri* covers the pile of rice with an earthen pot cautiously so that the pile is not disturbed. He then carefully plasters the rim of the pot with mud and cowdung carefully to prevent the ants and insects from entering inside and disturbing the rice grains. Next morning the *Dihuri* takes his bath and with the villagers go to the spot. The *Dihuri* uncovers the pile and closely inspects the position of the grains. If he finds the pile disturbed and the grains are scattered and some are found outside the turmeric circle the site is considered inauspicious and is at once rejected. On the other hand undisturbed position of the grains is the sign of good luck, and the site is selected for habitation.

#### Construction of Dwellings in the new site;

On an auspicious day which is selected by the *Dihuri* and the village elders at the *Darbar* the scared *Gakhi* *Khonte* is installed in the new site by the *Dihuri* and the *Naak* (the secular head of the village). The *Dihuri* offers milk and molasses water to the *Gakhi* and prays.

"Oh *Gakhi*, today we are installing you here in our new village site. Guard us from all the misfortunes. See that there is bumper harvest, so that every body gets enough to eat. Let the villagers and the cattle be in good health".

The *Darbarghar* is constructed near the *Gaohi* preferably in a central place in the village. This is constructed by joint effort of the villagers in which unmarried boys and girls take more active part. The men bring timber and other building materials from the jungle and erect the structure of the house, and the women plaster the walls. After the *Darbar* houses is constructed the *Dihuri* and the *Nast* build their houses and then others of the village follow suit.

Shifting of settlement site was a frequent phenomenon in olden times when the Pauli Shuinyas were solely shifting cultivators. But at present they rarely change their village site because they have taken to low-land permanent cultivation of paddy in the village bottom to a great extent. The practice of shifting cultivation is now restricted to a great extent because it is under a ban which is enforced strictly by the Forest Department. Adoption of permanent paddy cultivation in the valley bottom has changed the ownership of land from the village to the individual family and the settlement pattern, from shifting to a sedentary life. The land survey settlement in the Pauli area has formalized the individual holding of property which the settled cultivation initiated. The homestead lands and the kitchen gardens are recorded in the name of the individual families. Formerly such types of land belonged to the village as a whole. The change in land tenure system does not give much scope for the villagers to move to new sites unless dire necessity compels them to do so. With the adoption of wet cultivation the pressure on *Podu* cultivation has been minimized. There is no hurry now to rotate the swiddens within a short span of time. The fallow period has been lengthened and the swiddens get sufficient time to recuperate to have a thick growth of vegetational cover.

#### Ritual for constructing a New House :

On a Wednesday or Friday the family head may start the construction of his new house. Before the structure of the house is erected, the *Sudha Khonte* (sacred pillar) is fixed on the ground. The family head takes a bath and plasters a small



area with cowdung and water. He then digs a hole and prays the deities for good health and happiness of the family members and also for good harvest. He then puts some turmeric powder and a few rice grains in the hole. Seven mango leaves are tied with a string on the top of the sacred pillar which is covered with an earthen pot so that birds may not pass excreta at the top. The pillar is then kept in position in the hole and fixed to the ground without being tilted. Subsequently when the house is constructed the sacred pillar is kept in a central position which ultimately forms one of the pillars of the *Bhār* (sacred inner tabernacle). After the house is constructed a minor ritual is performed before it is occupied. Gruel (*Jau*) cooked in a new earthen pot is offered to the ancestral spirits in the *Bhār* portion of the house to safeguard the family members from misfortunes and calamities.

#### Description of House :

A Bhuiya hut is rectangular in shape with grass thatched roof sloped in front and at the back. Average size of a house is 25 ft. by 12 ft. The walls are made of logs of wood planted vertically close to each other and are plastered with mud and cowdung. The rafters and beams are made of logs of wood which are thatched with variety of wild grass called *Ahar*. Some well-to-do families have houses thatched with tiles usually made by them. The roof is supported by wooden pillars on all sides. Doors are made of split bamboo and plastered with mud and cowdung while the rich persons have doors made of wooden planks. A piece of rope is used to close the bamboo door but iron chain is fixed to the wooden door with a hook fixed to the door frame to facilitate locking. An earthen elevated platform called *Pinda* is built around the house or only in front for sitting purposes. The house lacks any window and therefore the inside is dark. The structure of a house is laid by men while plastering of the house is done by women. Most of the building materials like logs of wood, bamboo, rope and thatching grass, etc. are gathered from the forest while iron nails and chains are purchased from the market.

Functionally the Shunya house is divided mainly into three distinct portions. The innermost portion of the house is used for storing food grains. On a raised platform made of wooden logs are kept grain bin made of straw. Other household articles such as baskets are also kept on the platform. The chickens and goats take their shelter under the wooden platform.

The middle portion of the house is divided into three parts. The portion where a hearth is made serves the purpose of *Chula* (kitchen). From the hearth a narrow passage leads to a small and secluded apartment called *Shitar* which forms the abode of the ancestral spirits. The outer portion is used as the sleeping apartment and is called as *Das*. A wall is usually built between the above portion of the house and the outermost apartment and sometimes a door is fixed inside to separate the store and the kitchen-com-bedroom from the outer apartment which is used for more than one purpose. In the middle portion there is a hole where grain are husked by means of a pestle. Hence this portion of the house is known as *Kutunai* (husking apartment). Close to the walls near the Kitchen are kept water jars on a raised earthen platform.

It is important to note that only one of the clusters of huts belonging to a family contains the *Shitar*. The house with *Shitar* is called *Mutghar* (main house) while other huts are known as *Mole ghar* (out houses). Sometimes, a group of families of a minor lineage possess a common *Shitar* or *Mole-ghar* as they all have a common set of ancestral spirits.

Of all the sections, the cooking apartment and the *Shitar* are considered the most sacred. Entry of outsiders into these portions is strictly forbidden. If somebody enters the outer section that is, *Kutunai* he may be excused, but in no case he should get into the inner chamber. The portion having the hearth is considered sacred, because the food cooked here is offered to the ancestral spirits in *Shitar* portion. The entry of outsiders

defiles the food and there will be shortage of food in the family. The worst that happens is that the ancestral spirits get angry and may leave the house and bring sickness to the family members. Entry of menstruating women also defiles the house. During their menstrual cycle, therefore, the women are not allowed to enter this section and do not cook or sleep here. The clothes are also not dried on the roof of the *Mulaghar* as this house includes the sacred *Shivar*. No birth should take place in *Mulaghar*. A separate shed is built to serve as the lying-in-room. The parturient woman spends one or two months after delivery in this shed and it is only after the purificatory rites that she is allowed to enter the *Mulaghar*. Temporary pollution caused by death of person in *Mulaghar* is removed by propitiating the ancestral spirits and offering them gruel (*Jau*) cooked in a new earthen pot.

Cows and buffaloes are kept in separate sheds constructed close to the family dwellings, while goats and chickens are accommodated in any of the living houses.

### House-hold Equipments :

Material culture of the Pauri Bhuiyyas is poor. The house-hold articles consist of mainly earthen vessel, earthen jar and gourd vessel, palm-leaf mat, string cot and wooden head-rest, bamboo umbrellas, leaf rain-coat and bamboo hat, broom-stick made of wild grass, bamboo basket and winnowing fan, hand operated husking mortar and pestle, grinding stone and roller, small and big axes, a few knives, plough-share, digging-stick, hoe, bow and arrow, kerosine lamp and strawmade grain bin. The earthen vessels, iron implements and baskets are purchased from the market while most of the other articles are self made. Some of the richer families afford to own brass jars for storing water, brass and aluminium vessels and plates, cloth umbrella, husking lever operated by leg, lanterns and flash lights and other costly household articles. Bicycles and wrist watches are also no more an exclusive possession of the

caste people. The household materials of the plains Bhuiyyas of course, are more costly and numerous than those of the Pauris. The small-scale, largely personal, subsistence economic system with little in the nature of a market economy and limited money medium and a slow process of cultural borrowing are perhaps the main reasons for the low standard of material culture among the Pauri Bhuiyyas.

## CHAPTER IV

### ECONOMIC ORGANISATION

#### Daily Life :

The daily routine of work of the Pauri Bhuiyās throw much light on their economic life. It is therefore, necessary at the outset to give an account of the daily life around their hearth and home, field and forest before describing their agricultural practices and other economic pursuits.

The first crow of the cocks rouses the Pauri Bhuiyās from their slumber. After leaving their bed the man of the family may sit leisurely for a while near the house fire and enjoy the smoke of the country-made cigar, but the house wife soon pushes the bamboo door aside and comes out to engage herself in domestic works. She washes her face and keeps a gourd full of water and tooth twig ready for her husband. Thereafter she starts sweeping the courtyard and sprinkles cowdung water on it before doing any other work. Then she goes in and sits down at the mortar to husk paddy or *Jai*, by means of a pestle. It is the belief that grains husked before sunrise tend to multiply in quantity and therefore can feed more persons. After the grains for the day's meal are husked she takes up other works such as plastering the floor of the house, cleaning cowshed and throwing the dung in the kitchen garden washing utensils, and fetching water from the stream or river. The children enjoy playing together while the elderly men assemble at the *Darbar* to discuss matters of common concern. Returning from the *Darbar* man may engage himself in making baskets, repairing agricultural implements, or ploughing in the nearby field. After the food is cooked for him he goes out to work on the *Bikings* or *Kaman* (*Padu* plots). As the children do not stand hunger for longer and cannot wait till cooking is finished, they are served with some rice kept from the previous night with salt or onion. The house wife now gets time to brush her teeth, and goes for a bath. On return from the bathing ghat with pitchers of water she starts cooking the day's meal which constitutes boiled rice, *Kangu* or *Jai* and some greens serving as the side dish. When the food

is being cooked she utilizes her time in making leaf-cups and plates for the family use. Returning from his morning work the man brushes his teeth and goes to the stream for bath. Thereafter he takes his food and retires for a while. In the meantime the house wife and the children take their food. Then both the husband and the wife start for field work in the *Kaman*. They carry some extra food and gourd-ful of water with them to the field.

The whole family including the children leave for the field. They work there for the whole day, the man cutting the trees and bushes, setting fire to those, ploughing the field, hoeing, sowing, weeding and reaping or harvesting and the woman doing similar works except ploughing. On their way back home the man may carry a load of firewood and the woman plucks some leaves for domestic use and collects some greens, mushrooms and tooth-twig.

In slack seasons, when much labour is not needed for the agricultural operations both the man and the woman go out to the forest with others of their village with digging sticks to collect edible roots, tubers, fruits, greens, mushrooms, honey and eggs. During this seasons, especially in summer, the man may engage himself in hunting, fishing and bird-catching and while at home he makes his own plough, carrying poles and ropes, repair agricultural implements, brings thatching grass and thatches his house. In leisure hours the woman goes out to collect date-palm leaves from the jungle, weaves mats, washes clothes and plasters walls with coloured earth. On return from the field the man goes to the *Darbar* for relaxation and for a chit chat with others while the woman resumes her domestic works such as fetching water, chopping firewood and cooking food. A Pauri family takes food very early at night. Soon after the night meal the man with a lighted torch made of soft wooden logs move to his *Kaman* to spend the night there watching the crops and scaring away the wild animals. The unmarried boys go to sleep in the *Darbar* house. They spread their own mats and sleep with their feet towards the fire which is kept lighted in the centre throughout the day and night. The small children sleep in the house with their mother.

## Economic Life :

The Pauri Bhuiyans eke out their living mainly by shifting cultivation which is commonly called as *Kaman*. Recently they have taken to wet cultivation by reclaiming lands in the valleys. The produce from agriculture is not sufficient to go round for the whole year. Therefore the Pauris engage themselves in food collection, hunting, fishing, basket-making, wage earning and other economic pursuits to supplement their income from land. The paragraphs which follow gives an account of the land system of the Pauri Bhuiyans, their agricultural practices, food-gathering pursuits, and other sources of living along with division of labour between the sexes, live-stock, trade and marketing facilities, wealth and inheritance, and other aspects of their economic life.

## Land :

As has been pointed out already the Pauri country comprises blocks of hills and forests intersected by rivers or ravines and by plateaus and wooded plains. The area is mostly undrained and the tribals are free to cut and clear the patches of forests to practice *Kaman* cultivation. Except for a few selected areas in Bonai the restrictions enforced by the Forest Department in respect of *Kaman* do not apply to the Pauri area. Therefore the Pauris in most cases are free to carry on *Kaman* cultivation in the forests. Village being the land owning unit, each Pauri village has a definite area demarcated by boundary lines from the time of the feudatory chiefs and the villagers are free to cut forest and hunt within their territory. Trespassing in the land of another village leads to quarrels and conflicts which may either be decided mutually by both the villages or may be brought to the court of law for trial. Such cases, however, occur very rarely. During the field work, only one such case could be reported. This was a dispute between Jaidih & Tinto regarding their village boundary. The matter is still under negotiation and as the Pauri Bhuiyans are peace loving and good natured people and are least provoked. Therefore both the villages, were anxious to decide the matter by mutual discussion. Generally the following guiding principles are followed for deciding disputes over land.

Each village contributes a big chicken and a few honest and truthful Bhuinyas from the neighbourhood are invited to act as judges. They all proceed to the disputed land and there each village performs a ritual paying to *Dhavam Deva*, *Gekiri*, *Basumata* and *Pai* deities and ties the chicken there. The chicken is then covered with a new earthen pot and mud is plastered around its rim. The chickens are left for one night in this manner and the judges watch overnight so that the chicken of one village does not kill the other. Next morning, the pots are taken out to find out which chicken is dead. It is believed that the chicken of the village to which the disputed land does not belong should die and that of the village which is the real owner of the land should survive. If both the chickens stand the test and survive or otherwise die under the effects of occult sciences in such cases the disputed land is divided equally between both the villages. On the basis of these principles the judges decide the disputes concerning land.

*Type of land*—The cultivable land of the Pauli Bhuinyas may be classified under six main categories as follows—

(i) *Birings*—A patch of forest land brought under cultivation for the first year is called *Birings*. All the forest lands are owned by the village and every year patches of forests are distributed among individual families for cultivation. During the period of cultivation a piece of land remains under the individual ownership, but after it is left fallow it reverts back to the village. *Biri* (black-gram) is the principal crop grown in *Birings* but a variety of other crops such as niger, *Sufuri daska* (beans), *Kolath* (horse-gram), *Mung*, pumpkin, gourd, etc., are also grown in it.

(ii) *Jala* or *Kaman*—A patch of *Birings* under second year cultivation is called *Kaman*. A kind of fast-growing paddy is grown in *Kaman* and *Gengel*, ragi, maize *Rumu* are sown on all sides of a *Kaman* to mark the boundary lines.



(iii) *Goda*—When a patch of *Kaman* is cultivated for the third year it is then called *Goda*. After being cultivated consecutively for two years a patch of *Goda* generally lacks much fertility. Hence such crops like light paddy, *Jai Suin*, or *niger* are usually sown on such plots. After three successive years of cultivation the land is left fallow for ten to fifteen years till the fertility of the soil is regained by suitable vegetation.

(iv) *Nala*—In order to grow more crops some *Paurs* may take extra pains to plough open patches of fallow land and grow *niger* or *Koith* (horse-grass). Such plots are called *Nala*.

(v) *Bile* or *Jami*—These are permanent paddy plots reclaimed close to the river or stream bed in the valley so that the source of the water can be diverted to irrigate these lands. Such lands can be reclaimed up to 3° slope and the water from the hill stream is put to use for irrigating these lands. These lands are individually owned on a permanent basis. Paddy is the only crop grown in these lands.

(vi) *Bakadi*—Close to the family dwellings and preferably at the back side lie the patches of open land owned permanently by individual families. After recent survey and settlement work in *Pauli* area these plots with the homestead have been measured and record of rights has been issued to individual families. These backyard lands are very fertile because the house wife dumps cowdung cleaned from the cowshed every day on this land. Every year two crops such as maize and mustard are grown alternatively on *Bakadi*. A small portion is fenced properly where they grow tobacco, chilly, and some vegetables.

*Ownership of land*—Some kinds of land are owned permanently by individuals, some permanently by the village, while the ownership of some other types of land rests with the village though individual families exercise ownership over these during

the period of cultivation. The following table states the ownership pattern of different types of land in Bhuiya area.

TABLE No. 2

*Types of Land and Ownership Pattern*

Sl. No.	Bhuiya Term.	Type of land English Equivalent	Type of ownership
1	Birings	Swidden under the first year cultivation.	Owned by individual families for a temporary period till it is under cultivation. As soon as the land is left fallow the ownerships reverts back to the village.
2	Kaman	Swidden under cultivation for the second year.	Ditto
3	Guda	Swidden under third year cultivation.	Ditto
4	Nala	Open patches of fallow land taken up for cultivation.	Ditto
5	Bila or Jami	Permanent paddy plots constructed by individual families.	Owned by individual families permanently.
6	Bakadi	Kitchen garden	Ditto
7	Jhad	Virgin forest or village forest.	Owned by the village. Usually this patch of forest is not brought under cultivation and is kept reserved to provide timber and other house building materials to the villagers.

According to the Land Alienation Act the land of the Pauri Bhuiyas is not alienable to the non-tribals. The rule prescribed that without prior approval of the competent authority a Bhuiya cannot dispose of any land to a non-tribal.

*Distribution of land*—Patches of forest land for shifting cultivation are distributed among the individual family heads every year after the ritual called *Magh Punai* which is held in the month of January-February. The *Nask* (secular-head) of the village and *Dihuri* (village priest) go to the spot which is selected for cultivation and allot the plots to individual family heads. The *Dihuri* cuts a tree with axe or puts some mark on a tree to separate the boundary of one plot from the adjoining one. In course of distribution the *Nask* and the *Dihuri* are also given land to cultivate.

If the villagers want to cultivate some land on communal basis to increase the common stock of grains a plot may also be marked for joint cultivation by the villagers. Members from each family go to work in the village plot starting from felling trees and forest clearing to the harvesting of the crops. Both men and women may work jointly and the yield is stored in the village fund to be used for common purposes.

The unmarried boys and girls of a village also cultivate patches of *Kaman* on co-operative basis. The boys take bullocks from their respective families and plough the field, while the girls do such works like hoeing, cutting and clearing bushes, setting fire to the dried trees and bushes, weeding and harvesting. The seeds to be sown in the swidden may be borrowed from somebody or are brought on loan which is paid off after the harvest. The yield is stored in the common fund of the boys and girls to meet the expenses concerning their youth organization.

A patch of forest land cultivated consecutively for a period of three years is left fallow for 10 to 15 years till it recuperates sufficiently and regains its fertility. If suitable patches of forest

land are not available in a village, the village may borrow some land from the neighbouring village for temporary cultivation. In such cases, some of the elders of the village pay a visit to the other village with a few bottles of liquor and beg their permission to allow them to cultivate the land. If they agree, the villagers may cultivate the land for three years and in return give a few measures of grains and some bottles of liquor to the owners of the land as a token of their gratitude.

### Sources of livelihood :

The main source of livelihood of the Pauri Bhuiyyas is agriculture, i. e., shifting and settled cultivation. In this connection agricultural practices, cropping pattern, labour potentiality, division of labour between sex and age-groups, communal labour, capital for investment in agriculture and distribution of agricultural products, etc. are described. As the produce from agriculture is not sufficient for the whole year, the Pauris spend sometime in food gathering, hunting, fishing wage-earning, basket-making and such other supplementary sources of income. It is also necessary to describe all these pursuits to get a full picture of the economic life of the Pauri Bhuiyyas.

### Agricultural Activities :

1. *Bhings* (First year podu land) — The ritual of *Magha Purni* marks the beginning of the new agricultural cycle. After this ritual is performed plots of land in a patch of forest are selected for cultivation and these are allotted to individual family heads by the village headman and the priest. Soon after the distribution is over the Pauris start cutting trees and bushes.

The forest clearing continues for two to three months from the months of *Magh* (January-February) to *Chait* (March-April). Except a few trees which are spared here and there all others are cut down and piled in rows on the *Bhings* to dry in the sun. Small bushes and branches are piled around the standing trees. After these are dried fire is set to them. With the first shower of rain

the heaps of ashes are washed out and scattered all around thus providing manure to the field. The women collect the pebbles and stones, throw them away and break the clods of earth. The rocky places where ploughing cannot be carried out are hoed by men and women. After the field is ploughed twice, *Bai* is sown in it, and in the border, grains of *Rau* may be sown. *Dunke*, beans, pumpkin and gourd are planted in the ashes heaped around the standing trees so that the creepers twist and grow up round these supports. Some grains of *Mung* may also be sown by broadcast in *Bhinge* along with *Bai*. Weeding is done by women in the month of *Aswin* (September-October) to facilitate the growth of the *Bai* plants. In the month of *Pour* (December-January) after the crop ripens the plants are rooted out and heaped on a patch of ground previously cleaned and plastered with cowdung to serve as the threshing floor. The plants are left to dry in the sun for three to four days after which these are threshed by beating with a stick or pole to separate the seeds from the chaff. After threshing, the yield may be winnowed and stored in straw bins. Afterwards, *niger* is harvested in the same manner by threshing the dried plants with a light stick. The beans, pumpkin and gourd are harvested later on.

(2) *Kaman*—Upland paddy is sown in *Kaman*. As all the trees are cut down in the first year no major forest clearing is necessary in the second year. The dried grasses are only weeded out, and the small bushes are cut down to render the field suitable for ploughing. After the bushes are all dried these are heaped together and fire is set to them. The field is then ploughed twice in May-June and sowing starts soon after. Paddy is the main crop sown in *Kaman*, and a variety of other seeds such as *Ragi*, *Ganga*, *Maize*, *Kangu*, *Taidi* are sown on the borders. *Arhar* is sown by broadcast along with paddy, and cucumber, pumpkin and *Roma* are planted around the standing dead trees. After the paddy plants grow to a certain height the grass and other unnecessary growths are carefully weeded out. After a few showers of rain towards August and September, it becomes necessary to cut down the overgrown bushes. Paddy begins to ripe towards December. As

the swiddens are situated in heart of the forests away from the human habitation these are open to the ravages of wild animals, such as elephant bear, boar, deer and sambar. In order to save the crop from depredation of the wild animals the Pauri Bhuiyyas watch crop at night. They build small field huts in their *Kaman* on a raised platform or on the branches of big trees and sleep there at night driving the wild animals by shouting loudly, throwing stones and pebbles at them or by beating drums. A fire is kept burning under the watch-tower on the ground to scare away elephants. In some villages the Pauris take much pains to erect a hedge around the whole *Kaman* fields of the village collectively for protecting crops. Some openings are provided at places and different kinds of traps are set to trap the intruders.

After the crop is ready to be harvested a portion of *Kaman* is properly cleaned and plastered with cowdung to serve as the threshing floor. Reaping is done both by men and women and the bundles of the plants are heaped on the threshing floor around a pole preferably fixed in a central position. Four or five cattle are tied to this pole in a line and they are made to tread over the paddy bundles around the pole. After the grains are separated from the straw these are then properly winnowed and brought home. The straw is stored to feed the cattle.

(3) *Gude*—After the paddy is harvested the Pauris cultivate the *Kaman* for the third time. Such land is called *Gude* in the third year. As the *Gude* lands lack sufficient fertility the Pauris grow such crops as *Jaf* or *Gubdi* which can grow in soil deficient in fertility. In some cases if the *Gude* land is found to be fertile, paddy or niger may be sown in it.

(4) *Nale*—Any one who wants to increase his stock of harvest may plough a patch of open fallow land for one year and sow niger or upland paddy in it. These plots are not distributed to individual families and only those families having more man-power and labour potentiality may cultivate *Nale* lands. As *Nale* has very little fertility a bumper harvest is hardly expected from such land.

(5) *Bakod*—Patches of *Bakod* lying close to the dwellings are owned by individual families. These are manured daily by the women by dumping cowdung which are cleaned from cowshed. Two crops, i.e., maize and mustard are grown alternatively on such plots, but sometimes, paddy may be sown in lieu of maize. These plots are ploughed twice or thrice in the month of *Jestha* (May-June) and maize or paddy is sown in *Asad* (June-July). Grass and other wild growths are weeded out in due course and when the maize starts ripening the *Paulis* watch the crop at night. By *Anwin*, (September-October) maize is harvested and the field is ploughed twice for sowing mustard. Weeding and watching are not required for mustard cultivation which is harvested in *Pous*, (December-January). A small portion of *Bakod* may be fenced properly to grow tobacco, chillies and some vegetables. Tobacco-seeds are first germinated and then planted in rows in *Shod* (August-September). The tobacco leaves are ready for plucking by *Margashir* (November-December) and the chillies and vegetables are ready for use by the same time or a little later.

(6) *Bile* or *Jam*—*Bile* or permanent paddy plots are different from swiddens in more than one way. A patch of swidden is owned by an individual for a temporary period when it is under his cultivation, whereas *Bile* lands are privately held for all-time to come. Secondly the swidden is cultivated temporarily for a period of three or four years after which it is left fallow for a period of 10 to 12 years to recuperate, whereas paddy plots are cultivated permanently every year. Cultivation of swiddens involves heavy and labourious agricultural operations like cutting down the trees and bushes setting fire to them and hoeing. These activities are not necessary for *Bile* cultivation. The ashes are applied as manure to the swiddens while cowdung manure are applied to *Bile* lands. The swiddens are rain fed every year, whereas the *Bile* lands are irrigated, the sources of irrigation being hill streams and pools of water held by means of embankments. Lastly the swiddens are multi cropped while the *Bile* lands are single cropped.

The different agricultural activities performed during calendar months are stated in the following table.

TABLE No. 3

*Agricultural activities performed during different months*

Sl. No.	Type of land	Agricultural operations	When performed	
			Local names	English equivalent
1	Birings	A. Cutting trees	.. Magh-Phagan	.. February
		B. Fishing	.. Chait-Baisakh	.. April
		C. Ploughing	.. Jastha	.. May-June
		D. Sowing	.. Asad	.. June-July
		E. Weeding & Debushings	Aswin	.. September-October
		F. Harvesting	.. Pous-Magh	.. January



Sl. No.	Type of land	Agricultural operations	When performed	
			Local names	English equivalent
2	Kaman	A. D e g r e e s i n g & D e b u s h i n g	Chait-Balsakh	April
		B. F i l i n g	Balsakh	April-May
		C. P l o u g h i n g	Jeatha	May-June
		D. S o w i n g	Jeatha	June-July
		E. W e e d i n g & D e b u s h i n g	Saban-Bhod	August
		F. W e t h i n g	Karik-Mangair	November
		G. C u t t i n g and H a r v e s t i n g	Mangair-Pova	December
3	Guda	Same as Birings	..	..
4	Nala	Same as Birings or Kaman	..	..
5	Batali	A. P l o u g h i n g for maize or paddy.	Jeatha	May-June

B. Sowing maize/paddy ..	Jeetha	..	May-June
C. Weeding ..	Seaban	..	July-August
D. Harvesting ..	Bhod	..	August-September
E. Ploughing & Sowing mustard.	Bhod	..	Ditto
F. Harvesting mustard ..	Pous	..	December-January
G. Tobacco plantation ..	Bhod	..	August-September
H. Tobacco leaves ready for use.	Margashir	..	November-December
A. Ploughing ..	Chait-Baisakh	..	April
B. Manuring ..	Baisakh	..	April-May
C. Sowing ..	Jeetha	..	May-June
D. Weeding ..	Seaban-Bhod	..	August
E. Weeding ..	Margashir	..	November-December
F. Harvesting ..	Ditto	..	Ditto

*Agricultural implements*—The agricultural implements of the Pauri Bhuiyars consist of wooden and iron tools made and/or purchased by them. Most of these things are not very costly and therefore the Pauris can afford to purchase them. The wooden parts are mostly made by the men, and the iron blades are brought from the local markets. The following table gives a list of the agricultural implements, their names, prices, etc.

TABLE No. 4

*Agricultural implements of the Pauri Bhuiyars*

Sl. No.	Type of work	Tools used	Local name	Made by them or purchased	Approximate cost	Rs.
1	Felling trees	Small axe and Big axe.	Budia and Jangah.	Iron blade purchased.	0-80 to 3-00	4
2	Ploughing	Plough and Yoke	Langal and Javal.	Plough share purchased, M a d e by them.	2-00 to 4-00	
3	Hoeing	Hoe	Ganar	Iron blade purchased.	0-80	
4	Breaking clods of earth	Small axe	Budia	Ditto	0-80 to 1-00	
5	Digging earth	Cowbar and spade	Sabal/Kudal	Purchased Iron blade purchased	10-00 to 15-00 6-00 to 8-00	
			Ganul	Ditto	10-00 to 12-00	

6	Leveling	..	Leveler	..	Mai Kavala	..	Made by them Ditto	..	..
7	Carrying earth	..	Carrying basket	..	Gandua	..	Made or chased.	pur-	1-00
8	Sowing	..	Small Basket	..	Ditto	..	Ditto	..	0-25
9	Weeding and Debushing.	..	Scythe Small axe	..	Choran/ Badia	..	Purchased Ditto	..	4-00 to 5-00 0-80 to 1-00
10	Reaping	..	Sickle	..	Dao	..	Purchased	..	0.50 to 1-00
11	Carrying crops	..	Pole to carry paddy bundles.	..	Bhida Bad/ Dahargi	..	Made by them Ditto	..	..
		..	Carrying pole	..	Sila Tupa	..	Made by them or chased.	..	0-60 to 1-00 1-00 to 2-00
12	Harvesting	..	Threshing pole A long pole with pointed iron rod to separate straw from the grains.	..	Tenge Ushan/bad/	..	Made by them Iron part purchased	..	1-00 to 2-00 0-25
13	Storing Grains	..	Winnowing fan Straw bundles Bundles made of leaves.	..	Kala .. ..	..	Made or purchased Made by them Ditto	..	1-00 to 1-25 .. ..

### Division of Labour between Age and Sex Groups :

Each Pauri family is an economic unit where all able bodied adult members co-operate in all economic activities. The grown up children also assist the parents in many works. In this connection it is worth while to describe work done by different age and sex groups in Pauri society. The following table states the work done by different age groups.

TABLE No. 5

*Different age groups and work done by each group*

Sl. No.	Age Group	Type of works done
1	10-15 years	Debushing, degrassing, burning, ploughing, weeding, cutting trees, manuring, husking, grinding cereals and spices, fetching water, winnowing, plastering courtyard with cowdung, making leaf-cups and plates, chopping firewood with small axe, weaving of mat, herding cattle.
2	15-50 years	All sorts of heavy work of above categories
3	50 years till death.	Light works as done by the minors of 10 to 15 years of age.

The Pauri Bhuiyyas are always active and in their society idleness is condemned. The spirit of alertness and will to work is injected in them from the very childhood when the parents teach the youngsters to learn different works. Even small children from six to ten years of age take care of the young babies when the parents engage themselves in other works. In their old age, the Pauris do not like to sit idle and depend upon others completely for their subsistence.

Both men and women work together to earn for the family, and in most cases the women are more hard working than the men, but according to their traditional norms certain duties are done exclusively by men while some others are viewed to be the duty of the women. On some occasions a man may do the work of a woman, but certain tasks which are exclusively done by the menfolk are tabooed for the women. The division of labour between men and women is given in the following table.

TABLE No. 6  
*Division of Labour Between the Sexes*

Sl. No.	Activities	Done by the sex (in order of preference)	Remarks
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1	Cutting trees ..	Men ..	Women may do so
2	Firing trees ..	Men & women ..	..
3	Manuring ..	Women ..	Rarely done by men
4	Ploughing ..	Men ..	Tabooed for women
5	Sowing ..	Do. ..	Ditto
6	Levelling ..	Do. ..	Ditto
7	Cross-Cultivation ..	Do. ..	Ditto
8	Hoeing ..	Women ..	Also done by men
9	Transplanting ..	Women ..	Ditto
10	De-gussing ..	Do. ..	Ditto
11	Weeding ..	Do. ..	Ditto
12	Debushing in swiddens.	Men & women ..	..
13	Watching crop fields.	Men ..	..
14	Reaping crops ..	Women and men ..	..
15	Carrying crops to house.	Men with carrying pole. Women on head ..	Tabooed to women Men may do so

Sl. No.	Activities	Done by the sex (in order of preference)	Remarks
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
16	Threshing ..	Men ..	Men may do so
17	Winnowing ..	Women ..	..
18	Storing grains in straw packs.	Men ..	..
19	Husking ..	Women ..	..
20	Grinding ..	Women ..	..
21	Fetching water	Do. ..	Men do so in exceptional cases.
22	Cooking ..	Women at home Men in feasts.	Ditto
23	Sweeping & plastering.	Women ..	Men do so in difficulty.
24	Thatching ..	Men ..	Tabooed for women
25	Climbing trees ..	Men ..	Tabooed for women
26	Collection of roots & tubers etc.	Women ..	Also done by men
27	Chopping fire wood.	Men & women ..	Ditto
28	Basketry ..	Men ..	Women do not know the work
29	Weaving mat	Women ..	..
30	Preparing leaf cups and plates.	Women ..	Men do so in difficulty
31	Making plough and other agricultural implements.	Men ..	..
32	Herding cattle	Men ..	Women may do so
33	Going to market	Men & women ..	..
34	Hunting ..	Men ..	Tabooed for women

The above table shows three things regarding the division of labour between the Pauri men and women. They are (1) most of the works are done by both men and women (2) some are feminine works, but during menstrual cycle, birth and other unavoidable circumstances the man may do such works, and (3) activities like ploughing, sowing, thatching, climbing trees, and hunting are considered to be the work of men and are tabooed for women.

### Hiring of Labour :

Ordinarily the Pauri Bhuiyyas do their agricultural works themselves, but some phases of cultivation like cutting trees, weeding, and harvesting require periodical employment of outside labour because the man power available in the family is inadequate to meet the time-bound activities. Additional labour is hired from the following sources :—

- (i) By employing individuals on daily wage basis
- (ii) Hiring labourers on annual basis
- (iii) Getting free labour by lending cattle for ploughing
- (iv) Exchange of labour by mutual arrangement
- (v) Unmarried boys and girls of the village may be hired as a working team.
- (vi) The village as a whole may be hired as a working party
- (vii) Unmarried girls of cognate villages may be invited to work.
- (viii) Relatives working as labourers.

The daily wage for agricultural labour is paid in kind at the rate of two *Pa* of paddy per day. In lieu of paddy, *ragi* or other cereals may also be given. Traditionally cash payment per day was four annas and some food in the noon, but with the development of mining operations, exploitation of forest by the Forest Department and construction of roads, etc. the rate of daily wage has gone up up to one rupee. The rate of payment for employing a labourer on annual basis was Rs. 12-00 with food to be provided daily and some



clothes annually or twelve *Khandi* of paddy. The payment was made in advance or instalment basis. At present besides food and clothing the cash payment has been increased from Rs. 12-00 to Rs. 60-00 or more.

Many Pauris do not possess any cattle to plough their fields. Therefore it becomes necessary for them to hire cattle from some others with an agreement to provide free labour when required. Some phases of agricultural operations like felling trees and ploughing require joint effort. Some Pauris may unite and form a team and work on each others field on rotation and get their works done by this method.

Due to some difficulties like illness a Pauri may not be able to perform some of the heavy agricultural activities. In such a case, he may approach the unmarried boys and girls, i.e. the dormitory members and hire their services on payment of a token amount in cash or kind. He may provide food to them and pay a nominal amount towards their common fund. Sometimes the boys and girls incur loan in the form of rice and goat from a villager on the occasion of visit of their cognate girls from other village and in return work in the field of the lender to pay back the loan. Likewise a poor man unable to pay any wage may make an appeal to the council of village elders in the *Darbar* requesting for free supply of labour for a day. Considering the economic condition of the person, the village council arrange one working adult from each family to work in the field of the person on an appointed day. In the olden days the villagers, out of their gratitude and reverence to the village leaders used to work in the field of the *Neak* and *Dihari* for one day free of wage and in return the latter used to entertain the villagers with a feast. With the change in time and the way of life of the people this traditional custom is gradually weaning away.

In some stages of agriculture when many families are in need of hired labour and the village is not in a position to meet the requirement it becomes necessary to seek labour from other villages. A Pauri may invite the girls of cognate villages for a few days to

work in his field. During their stay in the village they are given food by the host and when they leave they may be given a few measures of foodgrains as a token of his affection. In no case the cognate girls are hired to work on wage basis.

Finally, in busy agricultural seasons, some Pauris make it convenient to visit their relatives to help them in their agricultural works. Like the cognate girls the relatives working for a Pauri are not paid any wage. But they are given some measure of foodgrains as gift at the time of their departure.

### Forced Labour (Bethi) :

During the reign of the ruling chief of Bonai state forced labour or *Bethi* was a common practice. The Pauris were forced to work on construction of roads and buildings free of payment. Besides, it was obligatory for each village to give 12 *Khandi* of *Biri*, 3 *Khandi* of mustard, 10 *Seers* of turmeric, 8 *Manas* of ghee, 2 *Khandi* of niger, honey, firewood, rope and vegetables to the chief every year. After independence this practice has however, been abolished.

### Stimulation for work :

The Pauri Bhuiyas do not work solely for economic benefit and, therefore, do not feel homely if they bind themselves exclusively to routine work. They have no stipulated working hours and do not like to work continuously for a certain period without having any diversion. This is due to their temperament and attitude towards work. They work with pleasure in accompaniment of music. They take everything easy and do not feel the burden to undertake any hard work. Since they are not accustomed to work following a rigid schedule and time table they do not like to work in any industrial and mining setting which according to them, provides no concession to their joyful orientation to work.

While at work the Pauris enjoy by relaxing under the shade of the trees and eating wild fruits freshly plucked from the nearby forest, or cucumber and maize grown in their fields.

The unmarried boys and girls break the monotony of their work by singing Doli songs. To add to all these merriments arrangement of feast and provision of drink are sources of great pleasure for the Paurs while working in the fields and the forest. When a Pauri engages the villagers to work in his field he arranges a feast which is cooked on the spot and provides some rice beer to the workers. This creates a new zeal among the workers and makes them energetic to put hard labour in work.

### Ritual observances in connection with Agriculture :

Distribution of lands in the hill-slope marking the agricultural cycle of the new year is done only after the commencement of *Magh Purni* ritual. Likewise, different agricultural activities like felling trees sowing, debushing and degrassing, and other economic pursuits connected with food gathering are performed only after appropriate rituals are observed. In order to safeguard their crops from the caprices of nature and the depredation of wild animals and to ensure bumper harvest the Bhuinyas perform suitable rituals to appease the supernatural elements. After harvest, and before eating the new crops, the Bhuinyas make it a point to offer the new crops to the deities and ancestral spirits to keep them in good humour. These rites and rituals which are connected with the agricultural cycle are not only meant for propitiating the supernatural beings but also for breaking the monotony of life and also for providing a source of enjoyment to the Pauri Bhuinyas. It is interesting and important to note that rites and rituals are performed in connection with the traditional agricultural operations and not with latest agricultural practices such as cultivation of paddy in *Bile* lands and cash crops such as mustard and niger in *Bekadi* lands.

*Leisure and Holidays*—Economic activities concerning food production and food quest keep the Pauri Bhuinyas extremely busy almost throughout the year. Felling trees ploughing, sowing, degrassing and debushing, weeding and harvesting are the hardest and busiest agricultural operations requiring regular attendance in the field. The slack seasons commence from *Anw* till *Marg-sir* (after weeding and before harvesting) and during *Pous* and *Magh*

(after the crops are harvested till tree felling is started). During the lean months the Pauri Bhuiyyas enjoy the hours leisurely by doing light work. The men may make baskets, organize hunting expeditions, move to the jungle for food collection and make agricultural implements, while the women weave mats, collect the grass from which broom sticks are made and gather roots and tubers from the forest. The annual feasts and festivals provide complete rest for the Pauris who enjoy the occasions in feasting and drinking. Besides, on certain occasions the Pauris are forbidden to work in the fields. Marriage is an occasion which requires the full co-operation of all the villagers. Likewise, in the case of death the Pauris abstain from agricultural activities till the purificatory rites are performed. During birth and its associated rites and rituals the family members may not attend to outdoor work and make arrangements for the birth rites. Thus on many occasions the Pauri Bhuiyyas get an opportunity to retire temporarily from heavy work and relax and rejoice till they again resume their routine work with new zeal and enthusiasm.

*Gleaning*—As the produce from agriculture does not suffice for the needs of the Pauris for the whole year, they devote some time to food gathering hunting and wage earning to supplement their income from agricultural sources. In the past the Pauris were primarily food gatherers and hunters. Agriculture was not known to them and as they narrate, in those days the forest all around their settlement was so rich with roots and tubers, fruits, berries and vegetables they could collect plenty of them and live happily. With the adoption of agriculture, they now produce a variety of crops. But they have not given up food gathering which is pursued side by side with agriculture. In fact, collection of food from the forest is second major economic pursuit of the Pauri Bhuiyyas and the poorer families depend on food collection for about six to eight months a year. Gleaning is done more or less in all the seasons of the year and by people of both sexes of all age groups. Both men and women, young and old go to the forest in groups with baskets and digging sticks in search of roots, fruits, tubers, and other edibles. During harvest the Pauris do not get time for

foraging, but in lean months they spend most of their time on food gathering and live upon roots and tubers. Food collected from the forest not only supplements Bhuinyas economy but it also breaks the monotony of their millet and ragi diet and provides nutrient and rich food to the Pauris. Roaming about in the forest in search of food is considered a happy pastime by the Pauris.

The Pauri Bhuinyas got about twenty varieties of wild tubers, thirty kinds of fruits and the same number of greens, and five varieties of mushrooms besides honey, Mahua flower, edible insects, eggs, etc. Mahua flowers are eaten raw and may be stored for distilling liquor, while the seeds may be used for extracting oil. Honey, eggs, insects and some varieties of tubers and greens are found throughout the year. But some of the forest products are available in particular seasons. Fruits are usually plenty in summer and roots and tubers grow in abundance during winter. But certain kinds of fruits like Jam and Anruli, tubers such as Pitaku, Aju and Bana-Kundur Tunga, greens like Santa Kunning, Pacher Chata Buraeni Mainga and Madrange and different kinds of mushrooms, during rainy season. Of all the fruits mango is the most important, which grow plenty in the forest and Bhuinyas collect basketful of mangoes for their consumption.

#### **Forest Economy :**

Besides providing food forest plays an important role in Pauri economy. Minor forest products like lac, resin, honey timber and firewood, wild rope which the Pauris collect from the forest fetch a substantial income and make their life comfortable. The jungle also supplies medicinal herbs which give relief from pain and cure illness of various types. Briefly speaking forest occupies a pivotal position in socio-religious life of the people.

#### **Animal Husbandry :**

The Bhuinyas being agriculturists raise livestock, but have not taken up animal husbandry on a wide scale. Their livestock include cows, bullocks, buffaloes, goats, sheep, and poultry. Chickens, goats and sheep are common possessions of many Pauri families. These are used more for non-agricultural purposes than for

anything else. They are sacrificed at the deities, slaughtered on occasions to entertain guests and relatives and may be sold for cash. Cows and buffaloes, on the other hand, are reared mainly for agricultural purposes. They plough the fields and supply manure. The Bhuiyās however do not milk their cows because their belief is that the milk is for the calf and not for men. A few families have kept buffaloes and sell buffalo milk and milk products and earn substantial amount of money.

The cattle are not given any fodder. They are loose in the day time under the supervision of cow herd to graze in the nearby forest and are kept confined in shed on their return in the evening. Cows and buffaloes are tethered in separate sheds, while goats and sheep may either be accommodated in a small shed constructed for them, or if they are small in number they may be tied in a corner of the sleeping house. Chickens are always kept inside the house under the wooden platform raised for storing. Cattle feed pose no problem for the Pauris as the vast forests all around provide good pasture for the cattle. Goats and sheep are either tended along with the cows or in separate groups. Most of the families engage one of their family members to tend the goats and sheep but these may be tended co-operatively by a number of families on rotation basis or by employing a herdman. Buffaloes are always herded in a separate group from other animals. Usually a Gow or a Pauri Bhuiya cowherd is employed to herd all the buffaloes of the village throughout the year. For about five months after the harvest of crops till the next sowing is over no herdman is necessary to herd the cattle as the cattle graze of their own accord and return home in the evening. But when the crops are present in the field it is necessary to herd the animals as otherwise they cause damage to the plants.

There is no cattle market in the neighbourhood of the village. The nearest cattle market are at Bonai and Kojhargarh which are situated at a distance of about forty and sixty miles away from Kojra respectively. A good cow or bullock costs about Rs.100 to Rs. 150, while a buffalo may cost Rs.300 or more.

The Paui Bhuiyyas attach great sacredness to the cows and bullocks. During Gamba festival they feed the cattle and buffalo with puffed corn and fried paddy, give them complete rest and worship them.

*Basketry*—Basketry is a profitable craft known only to a few Paui families of Koina area. Bamboo is found in plenty in the nearby jungle and the tools and implements used in basket-making are very simple. The important tools consists of an axe to cut the bamboo a big knife to make splits out of the thick splits and a crude iron needle for sewing the rim of the basket with threads of young bamboo shoots. Raw materials used in making baskets are available free of cost and the leisure hours are spent on making baskets. The baskets made by the Paui consist of big and small baskets for storing grains, huge paddy containers serving the purpose of a granary, winnowing fan, basket for cleaning cowshed and throwing away rubbish, small baskets used while sowing grains and the like. The baskets made by the Bhuiyyas have great market value which are sold in the weekly markets and a Bhuiya earns on an average about Rs. 20 per month during slack seasons and about Rs. 10 during busy agricultural seasons. The money earned by selling baskets is used for purchasing tea, tobacco leaves and paste, clothes, salt, vegetables and other consumer goods. The menfolk make baskets, but the art is not known to the women who weave mats of date-palm leaves both for family use and for sell. Unlike basketry, the art of weaving mats is known to all Paui women of different areas.

*Trade and Barter*—The Paui Bhuiyyas are neither good traders nor interested in trading. They are also not keen to collect forest produce in large quantity for marketing purposes. Gum, resin and honey may be collected occasionally when the Paui roam about in the forest in search of house building materials like rope and thatching grass, or while digging out roots and tubers. These articles collected occasionally in very small quantity are sold to the non-tribal merchants in weekly markets. But this is not viewed as a substantial source of income by the Paui Bhuiyyas.

Barter was widely prevalent in Pauri area in the past. With the introduction of money economy the Pauris are no longer interested in carrying on barter. Money as a medium of transaction has significantly captured the Pauri area. The Pauris sell all their marketable commodities for money and purchase the articles of their daily requirements by paying cash. Some of the agricultural products are still bartered by the Pauris for some of their requirements. For example mustard, niger, castor seeds, *Pil. Biri*, Mung and beans are bartered for rice and paddy. Ordinarily a Pauri Bhuinya desirous of selling his goods would have to go to the market and sell them there and with sale proceeds buy whatever he wants for himself and for his family. In barter system, on the other hand, he need not take the trouble of going to the market for any transaction. Soon after the crops are harvested the non-tribal merchants visit the Pauri villages with load of rice and paddy and the Pauris get those readily by exchanging their crops at their door step at the usual rate. One *Seer* of sagi, mustard, *Biri*, Mung or beans fetches two *Seers* of paddy or one *Seer* of rice. The rate of exchange of castor seeds for paddy is 1 to 3. Occasionally, the Pauris also give their cash crops to the local merchants to liquidate their old debts. In such cases they are easily exploited by the lenders. There are various ways by which the merchants cheat the poor Pauris firstly the former charge a high rate of interest and cheat them in weights and measures.

In order to free the Pauri Bhuinyas from the clutches of the non-tribal merchants the Tribal & Rural Welfare Department established purchase and sale fair price shops in Bhuinya and Juang Pith of Koonjhar district. The idea was to procure the marketable commodities directly from the tribals and supply them their consumer goods at a reasonable price. The other objective of the scheme was also to advance interest free loans to the Pauris which they pay off after harvest by selling niger, mustard, pulses and oil seeds directly to the fair price shops at the prevalent market rate. The scheme has served useful purpose in Bhuinya Pith of Koonjhar but the Pauri Bhuinyas of Koirs area have been least benefited by it because the shop was located in the plains far away from the Pauri villages.



**Other Occupations**—Some Pauri Bhuinyas are found to have taken up work in Barsuan mines of Hindustan Steel Ltd. on weekly wage basis and in road and house construction works and some others engage themselves in cutting timber under the Forest Corporation during summer. When forest roads are built both men and women go to work for wages. At the initial stages of mining operation the Pauris did not like to send their girls to work in mines because they apprehended that the girls would come in contact with many outsiders and might be subjected to immoral sexual acts. But it was difficult to prevent the girls from going to work in the mines and the apprehensions of the elders that the girls would go astray has come true in many cases. Education has not made much headway among the Pauris and therefore the cases of service in white collar jobs are negligible.

**Hunting**—The Pauri habitat is full of high hills and dense forests teeming with wild games like deer, sambar barking-deer, boar, wild rats, peacocks, etc. and the Pauris carry on hunting whenever they are free from agricultural activities. Hunting is viewed by the Bhuinyas more as a sport and a means of getting protein food than as substantial source of income. But it is intimately associated with their socio-cultural life and has its economic and religious importance.

Bows and arrows constitute the only hunting implements used by the Bhuinyas. Whenever a Pauri goes out he takes a bow and a bunch of arrows with him just for safety in the jungle. While in forest he may come across some prey by chance and may kill it. Hunting is rarely done individually. It is a group activity rather than an individual activity.

The communal hunting expeditions reveal interesting features of Bhuinya social, economic and religious life. *Akhan' Paridh'* the annual hunting festival, marks the first day of hunting for the Bhuinyas. It is held on the third day of the moonlit night in the month of Chait (*Akshya Tritia*).

The preceding evening, the *Nast* meets the villagers at the *Daydar* and informs them that they are to start on *Akhan/ Paridhi* on the following day. The men who wish to join in hunting observe continence and sleep away from their wives. Early in the morning all assemble at the *Daydar* armed with their bows and arrows and with drums and sticks proceed to the forest. The hunters bring seven bows, seven arrows, two chickens and some husked paddy (*Akata*) and turmeric powder and give them to the *Nast*. The *Nast* worships the *Dharam Deva* (Son God) *Sasut/* (Earth Goddess) *Gaisri* (village deity) and *Soram* at the outskirts of the village and offers two chickens to the deities. He sprinkles the blood on the bows and arrows and prays "Today we are celebrating the *Akhan/ Paridhi*. Let the hunters meet all sorts of games on their way and let them be able to shoot down all". He also burns some incense and tobacco to please the forest and hill spirits (*Baghas* and *Sasut*) to ensure success in hunting. The offered chickens are burnt and the person joining the hunting partake it before they start for hunting.

The only method adopted by the *Bhainyas* in communal hunting is beating the bushes and driving the animals. After reaching the jungle the party is divided into two groups. The daring and fearless persons having name as good hunters are selected as *Ghasas*. They sit on key places through which the animals are expected to pass and hide themselves behind the trees. The rest of the party beat the drums and the bushes, shout at the top of their voice, throw stones and make peculiar noises to drive the animals towards the *Ghasas*. As soon as the game runs near by the *Ghasas* shoot it down by their bow and arrow. As soon as the game is bogged the *Dhor/* or any elderly man in the absence of the *Dhor/* takes some of the blood and offers to the *Dharam Devata*, *Sasut/*, *Gaisri*, *Soram* and *Baghas* and prays, "Here we are offering the first blood of the hunted animal. May we attain success in hunting in future". The man whose arrow kills the animal also takes some blood from the game and offers it to his family ancestors praying for success in hunting in future.

After the animal is killed all go to the *Nak*'s house with the game. The women of the village greet them by washing their feet with turmeric water anointing their forehead and chin with turmeric powder and kissing them.

The meat is cut into pieces except the head of the animal, one loin and the hind quarter. One of the boys of the hunting team comes down secretly from under the bush and mimics the gait and gestures of the hunted animal. He is beaten by the leg of the animal on his back and is given the hooks to roast and eat. Before the meat is distributed, some meat, the brain and the heart of the animal are roasted on embers and offered to the deities in *Jambū* leaves. Such offering is made thrice, i. e., on behalf of the persons who participated in the hunt, on behalf of the hunter whose arrow killed the animal and on behalf of the villagers (*Sarabhai*).

The two hind quarters of the game are presented to the *Nak* as *Ahari* *Bhet* and one of the loins is offered to the hunter. The rest of the meat is equally divided into two shares. One share is equally distributed among all the members of the hunting party and the other share is equally distributed among all the families of the village.

The *Nak*, in return, rewards the hunter with a cloth of ten cubits if a Sambar or pig or a deer is killed and a *Gamcha* (napkin) for a *Kufari* (barking deer). In lieu of cloth he may give twelve annas for the long cloth and four annas for the napkin. Besides, he offers a basketful of rice cakes to the members of the party both in successful and unsuccessful hunting.

The ceremonial hunting is observed for three consecutive days, i. e., the first day being the *Nak*'s day, the second for the *Dikow* and the final day for the *Sarabhai* or villagers. The same procedures are followed on all these days except that the *Nak* presents the party with a basketful of rice cakes on the first day to carry with them to the forest and the women offer *Mandla* cakes and rice cakes to the party on the third day.

A study of the hunting practices of the Pauri Bhuiyās and the associated rites and rituals throw much light on the various aspects of their life and culture. It reveals the belief system of the people on the one hand and throws light on varying obligations between the different kins. The specific points of interest can briefly be stated in the following :—

Hunting is more a religious observance than a quest for food. The Bhuiyās lead a lonely life in the hills surrounded by forest and hill spirits, and consider it essential to offer sacrifices to these spirits at least once a year to please them.

For success in hunting the Bhuiyās observe a series of taboos so malepās, purity and sanctity. The persons whose wives are in menstrual period are neither allowed to join the hunting party, nor to watch and take part in the ritual performances connected with hunting. On the previous night of the *Akharī Pividhi* day the persons desirous of going on hunting observe strict continence and sleep in a separate bed from their wives. They should not see the face of any menstruating women when they start for hunting lest they would have no chance of success in hunting.

The *Akhar* also observes continence on the previous night so as to enable him to perform the rituals on the next morning. He offers chicken, husked rice and turmeric powder to the deities and also burns incense and tobacco and prays for success in hunting.

The various rites and rituals associated with hunting throws light on the belief system of the Pauri Bhuiyās. Segregation of women from the hunting rituals is based on the idea that the presence of menstruating women will defile the spirits and the deities and may result in unsuccessful hunting. Hence every precaution is taken to avoid women during the hunting expedition. Women, being the weaker sex, cannot take part in hunting which requires masculine strength and vigour. Added to this the periodical pollution renders them unfit for taking part in hunting excursions.

The Bhainyas believe in the casual relation between a successful hunting and bumper harvest. According to them successful hunting during *Akhani Paridhi* indicates a rich harvest in the current year and this belief keeps them alert to safeguard against all the evils obstructing success in hunting.

To ensure successful hunting the Pauris believe in and perform sympathetic magic. The two chickens sacrificed by the *Nak* just before the party starts for hunting is believed to contain the spiritual powers of the gods and godlings to whom these are offered and if the members of the party eat a bit of such meat they soon possess such power and may thus be able to slay any game they meet.

The blood of the chickens, after sacrifice, is also believed to carry such power and hence the *Nak* sprinkles it on seven bows and arrows just to help for the success in hunting.

The arrow which kills the animal is brought out from the body of the prey and is never washed in water. The bloodstained arrow head is let to dry out. By doing so it is believed that the arrow would always kill more games in future and would remain bloodstained for ever.

After the game is killed and before the meat is distributed one of the members of the hunting party imitates like the slain animal and mimics its gait. Crawling down he comes from a corner and passes by before the hunters. One of the members of the hunting party takes a leg of the game and hits the imitator with it. It signifies that in future hunting, no game can escape the look of the hunter and the hunters would be able to kill all the animals they meet.

Before the meat is distributed, the brain, heart and some meat is roasted on ember and offered to the spirits and the deities for whose favour they met with success in hunting. The meat thus offered is considered sacred and is believed to carry the 'power'. The husbands of the menstruating woman are not allowed to eat such meat. If any outsider eats such meat the real hunting power is believed to be transmitted to his body and the villagers may not have the good luck to have more success in hunting.

Hunting is an occasion when one can notice the interplay of various relations. Hunting is purely a communal affair, which involves co-operation of all the villagers. Each village has to hunt within its boundary demarcated from the time of *Raja*. Since successful hunting indicates rich harvest, it becomes the duty of all the villagers to try heart and soul to make the hunting expedition a success. Generally each family deputs one or more of its male members to participate in the hunting, and it is the responsibility of the women to collect *Mandā* and paddy from all the houses and prepare cakes for the party on the third day of the *Akhani Paridhi*.

Distribution of meat is made keeping in view the social and political life of the village. The hunter must get an extra share for his ability to kill the prey, but *Nasā*, the head of the village, gets two hind quarters for his status and authority in the village. The *Dihari* is not given any special portion of meat, but is always given an extra share of meat for holding an office in the village. All the families get share of the meat no matter whether anyone participated in the hunting or not.

Getting some extra meat on the part of the *Nasā* is of prestige rather than of economic value because the cost he has to bear for the gift of cloth and cakes to the hunters is much more than the actual cost of the meat he gets. It may also be noted that the *Nasā* does not eat all the meat he gets as a special share. This meat is divided into three shares. The first share is used by his family. The second to the families of his closer lineage group and the third to the rest of the families of the village. The hunter also distributes some meat from his special share among the families of his closer lineage group.

In course of time the Bhuinyas are getting more modern in their outlook, and are dropping out their traditional customs associated with hunting. Some of the Bhuinyas have managed to acquire guns and are hunting games on their own sweet will. Hunting is gradually becoming more and more an individualistic affair. The individual hunter who has killed an animal by shooting in his gun sells major portion of the meat for money instead of distributing it among his kith and kin and co-villagers.

Another marked change is noticed in the attitude of the Pauri for hunting. In the olden days jungle was thick and the games were plenty all around. Hence, the chances of success in hunting was far greater than in the present days when most of the jungles in the Bhuiyas country are frequently cut down for shifting cultivation and the wild animals are rapidly decreasing in number. These difficulties, however, have least affected the age old belief system of the people, who still observe the hunting ceremony with all its detail. Posts of new leaders have been created in the village, but the new leaders are never given special share of meat in hunting. The Naek continues to enjoy his traditional status in the village and gets the hind quarters of the hunted animal as usual. The amount of reward the Naek used to give to the hunters has also been increased. Since the price of the cloth has now been increased the Naek now offers two rupees in lieu of the cloth instead of twelve annas which he used to pay in the past.

*Fishing*—Like hunting, fishing may be viewed more as a past-time than as an economic pursuit of the Pauri Bhuiyas. Narrow and shallow swift running streams full of boulders are not suitable for fishing and very rarely the Pauris may engage themselves in catching fish, in the hill streams. However, some time they catch small fish from the streams by hand. The children having enough leisure time may use fishing rods to catch fish, while the adults spend their time on activities of greater economic gain. Women may catch fish while taking bath. They may spread a piece of cloth under the water and by filtering the water out of the cloth catch small fish. A portion of the stream bed may also be carefully bounded on the sides and fish may be caught after removing the water from it. In plains, the Bhuiyas use small fishing traps made of bamboo splits. These are set against the flowing water of the stream or at an opening of the over flooded paddy plots during rainy season to entrap fish. Fish may be eaten by roasting or cooking with oil and spices, but as the Pauri Bhuiyas relish dried fish the catch may be stored for future use after drying in the sun or by smoking on fire.

*Wealth and Inheritance*—As indicated above the Pauri Bhuiyās are poor and live from hand to mouth. There is no division of people into rich and poor class among them. The term 'wealth' has little connotation for the Pauris as most of them do not have means to amass any wealth. They say that the small axe is their wealth which gives them food, shelter and clothing, those who have enough food to eat and do not incur any loan are considered rich persons in the Pauri society. The wealth of the Pauris largely consists of cattle, foodgrains, brass utensils, gold and silver ornaments and lowland paddy fields. As the Pauris are not much conversant with money economy and do not like to hoard money this may not be considered as an item of their wealth.

Any wealth owned by individual family is distributed equally among all the brothers after the death of the father except the eldest one who gets a little extra share. Ornaments are exclusive possession of the women. If a Pauri dies without having any son to inherit his property the same may go to his brothers living in own or separate villages, though a small share may be given to his daughter. In absence of brothers the property may be claimed by the deceased's father's brother, father's brothers' sons, or by other close lineage members. If no such kin is found available the property is enjoyed by the tribal council called *Pih* who assemble on an appointed day and enjoy a hearty feast by disposing off the deceased's belongings. A widow enjoys the right over the property of her husband till her death, but forfeits her claims if she leaves the village of remarriage. A Pauri marrying the widow of his deceased elder brother has, however, every right to inherit all her properties, in absence of male issues a daughter may enjoy the property of her father during her life time if she leads the life of a spinster, but with marriage she loses all rights on her parental property.

From the study of the economic life of the Pauri Bhuiyās it may thus be concluded that the Pauris struggle hard to earn their livelihood. Most of them continue to cling to their age old primitive agricultural practices. Modern methods of agriculture, use of chemicals, fertilizer and compost, adoption of improved seeds and



high yielding crops are yet to be made popular in Pauri villages. Crude plough, hoe, digging sticks and axes are the main agricultural implements of the Pauris which are used for *Bhinge* cultivation. The water sources have not been properly tapped to provide irrigation facilities in the Pauri country. Shifting cultivation being subjected to the vagaries of nature, they supplement their income from that swidden by gathering food materials from the jungle and working on wage as agricultural labourers as coolies in public works and as unskilled labourers in mining activities. In fact most of their time is spent on quest for food and very little time on any skilled craft and specialized work. On special occasions like marriage and death the Pauris have to incur heavy expenditure which is not possible to meet from their own sources. Such occasions force them to lend money from the local money lenders at an exorbitant rate of interest. Being trustworthy they pay back the loan with interest in time and in this way most of the produce from land is drained away for clearing the loans.

## CHAPTER V

### LIFE CYCLE

Essentially the successive stages of development in the life cycle of a person comprise birth, early childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age and death. When a person attains adulthood he or she is married and sets up his or her family. This chapter deals with the essential events in life i. e. birth, marriage and death with associated ceremonies and rituals.

#### Birth :

Barenness in women is always condemned. Barren women are looked down upon by others and they occupy low position in the society. On the other hand, women giving birth to many children enjoy considerable pride and prestige. One of the main intentions of marriage is to beget children, and in case a wife fails to fulfil this aim the husband is socially permitted to remarry. Birth is always welcomed in Bhuiya society, but a male child is more valued than a female child, in spite of the fact that the parents have to face acute economic strain to marry their sons. The girls, on the otherhand fetch cloth, cattle, money, grains and other items of bride wealth for their parents in marriage. Both the boys and girls equally labour hard and help their parents in agricultural pursuits, but the fact that the girls leave their parents for good after marriage, and the boys continue in the family explains perhaps why the parents are more inclined towards the sons.

From conception to the final purificatory rites number of rites and restrictions are followed concerning birth of a child in a Bhuiya family. The father and the expectant mother do not eat any meat of any sacrificed animal. They are also not allowed to go to the place of worship to witness the rituals. The woman does not eat curds or any thing which tastes sour because it is believed that these things hinder easy delivery. She may not go to the forest or to any lonely and distant place lest the evil spirits might injure the foetus. She should not touch a corpse, or see the smoke rising from cremation fire. At the time of eclipse, the expectant

mother should either confine herself inside the house, or remain outside. But if she is outside she should not come in and if she is indoors she should not come out. If she violates this taboo the baby in the womb is likely to be displaced. Such a woman is not allowed to offer cooked-rice or *Jau* to the ancestral spirits at the family shrine in the *Shikar* portion of the house.

Birth never takes place in *Mulaghar* where the sacred family shrine is situated. A separate shed is constructed as a lying-in-room. An elderly woman who may be a *Bhuiya*, or any other caste and tribe may be called to serve as midwife (*Satundari*). She takes care of the new born and the parturient woman and receives rice, dal, a new cloth, and cash varying from Rs. 2-00 to Rs. 10-00 as remuneration for her help. Difficult labour is believed to be due to the ill temper of the family ancestors, *Paraspirits*, play of witchcrafts or due to other malevolent spirits. To effect an easy delivery the village priest may worship the *Gairi* and promises to offer sacrifices on behalf of the concerned family. The family-head also prays the family ancestors at the *Shikar* with a potful of water for quick delivery and make vows to sacrifice goat or sheep. A few drops of this water is sprinkled over the woman and she may also drink a little quantity of this water to get relief from acute pain. In case the pain continues for days together, a witch-doctor (*Raulia*) is consulted. He reads omens by measuring two pieces of reeds. After the offender obstructing delivery is detected, steps are taken to quicken the delivery without pain.

The naval string is cut by the mother or by the baby's father's mother if the former is not in her senses. In no case it is cut by the midwife. The naval cord of the male-child is cut by an arrow head which is afterwards presented to his mother's brother, while that of the girl is cut by a piece of bamboo split which is thrown away after use. The placenta and the cord are buried at the back side of the house. The midwife bathes the baby and the mother in tepid water and warms them by kindling a fire inside. For about a week or so the mother is not given greens, vegetables, and *Dal* to eat. She only eats fresh cooked-rice, salt and onion and should refrain from eating fish and meat till the child sits up.

The birth pollution continues for about two to three months which is removed phase by phase. On the fifth or seventh day after the child birth the baby and the parturient woman take their first purificatory bath. The clothes are given to the washerman for washing. This day the mother ties a piece of new thread beamed with turmeric powder around her own neck and that of the baby. From this day other members of the family may take water from her hands, but she is not allowed to enter the kitchen and cook food. Name giving ceremony may be observed on this day or may be deferred to the seventh day or to a later date.

*Name giving ceremony*—A case study of the name giving ceremony describing the rites and rituals performed on this occasion is given below.

Naming ceremony for Chihula's son was performed on the 22nd February, 1970 on the fifth day after the birth of the baby. About 10 A. M. the Mahajaris (old women) of the village assembled in the house of Chihula. Mangulu's mother an elderly woman, who also served as the midwife was called to officiate in the naming ceremony. She bathed the mother and the child in tepid water after anointing their body with turmeric paste. The confinement room was also cleaned. The mid-wife herself then took bath and laid a painting on the cleaned patch with a white liquid prepared from white rice powder. On the painting was kept about a Pai of paddy and a bowl filled with water and a mango twig was placed on the paddy pile. The mother holding the baby on her lap sat near the painting and the old woman who officiated the ceremony took her seat to a side facing the mother and the child on the opposite side. She threw a grain of Arua (sun-dried husked paddy) rice and a *Ti* (sesamum) seed together on the bowl-ful of water and prayed. "We are giving a name to the new born". If the name is auspicious let the rice and the *Ti* float. Let everything end happily". In the case of a male child the name of his father's father is usually preferred, and in case of a girl her father's sister's or father's mother's name is considered proper. In this case the same practice was followed. After uttering each name she throw grains

of rice and *Ti* on the water and watched until the grains floated so that the name for which the grains were intended was selected. In this case, the grains floated when the name *Sajan* (the baby's father's father) was uttered. The *Sutuni* then exclaimed "Oh, *Sajan* has come". The name was thus selected without any hesitation. The *Sutuni* then blessed the mother and the baby by touching turmeric powder and sun-dried rice on their foreheads and throwing the same on them. The baby and the mother were also greeted with waving a lighted lamp followed by *Hul Hul* sound. She then threw the bowl of water on the thatch of the house. To announce the name given to the new born she struck her bangles on the empty bowl seven times saying loudly "Oh, the name *Sajan* is given to the baby. Let all be aware of it". Other *Mahataris* also blessed the baby and the mother in the same manner and with this the name giving ceremony came to an end. This day all the used earthen cooking pots were thrown away and a little *Jaw* cooked in a new pot was offered to the family ancestors.

In olden days all the *Mahataris* were served with cooked rice, but it is now given only to the *Sutuni* and not to *Mahataris*. It is reported that the *Paulis* living in the interior areas in *Bonai* and *Keonjhar*, are bound to give a feast to the villagers on the occasion of name giving ceremony. But on account of poverty it is not now possible to follow this tradition and therefore some children cannot be given a name till very late age. They are addressed as *Gajinagal* (small plough) in the case of boys, and *Kainful* (water lily) in the case of girls.

After the name giving ceremony is over other families may accept drinking water from the hands of the parturient woman and cooked food from other members of the family, but she does not enter the kitchen and cook food until the final purificatory rites are performed after two or three months.

**God *Dhusei* ceremony**—This ceremony is usually performed after the child walks and becomes five or six years old. The ceremony is performed to propitiate the deities praying them for health and happiness of the child.

Usually goats and fowls are slaughtered to appease the *Pat* and other deities and *Jau* is offered to the ancestral spirits. If a child does not suckle properly the parents may also promise to offer sacrifices to the *Pat* in *God Dhuari* Ceremony. The ceremony performed for the ward member's daughter of the village Jaldih is stated below.

The member's daughter refused to suckle her mother's breasts during her infancy. The member made a vow that he would sacrifice a *Boka* (uncastrated goat) and chickens to the *Pats* and the deities and a portion of *Jau* to the ancestral spirits if the girl would suckle properly. Afterwards the baby became slight and suckled properly. When the girl became three years old the member arranged for the ceremony. He purchased a piece of new cloth for his daughter and arranged the materials like *Akta* (sun dried husked paddy), a *Boka*, a cock, small chicks, a new earthen pot and *Arur* rice for cooking *Jau* and turmeric powder which are required for the ritual. In the evening of the 25th February, 1970, he met the village elders in the *Darbar* and expressed his wish to perform *God Dhuari* ceremony for his daughter. This was, however, unanimously agreed by all.

Preparations for the ceremony were made on the 26th morning. As the ceremony was performed on the bank of the stream all the articles were brought there. Those who arranged rice for their own use also assembled near the place of worship with their stock of rice and cooking utensils. All the families could not participate as they could not arrange rice for their meal. Men and children joined the ceremony and no woman attended it.

The *Dhuari* started worshipping at about 10 A. M. after taking a bath. He cleaned two patches with cowdung and water, laid paintings of three horizontal bars cross-cut by three perpendicular bars in liquid rice paste. One patch was meant for the *Pats* and spirits, while the other was intended for the deities. He collected a few boulders to represent the deities and spirit and placed them on the cleaned patches. Facing east and bending his left knee in a kneeling posture, he washed *Akta* and placed nine small piles

in honour of *Ōsai* and the *Pat* deities. The incense was kept burning. He then brought a chicken, made it to eat a few grains of *Akara* piles, plucked a few feathers from its head, cut the head and placed it on the pile. The body was thrown to the left side. Six chickens were offered in the same manner. Some of these refused to partake the *Akara* grains indicating that the deities for whom these were dedicated were not satisfied with the offering. The member, therefore, knelt down and with folded hands prayed the deities not to get annoyed with him as the chickens were small in size. He also prayed that he did not have any big chickens in his stock and the deities may be kind enough to accept their shares meekly. Incense was burnt separately for *Thakuran* and *Boram*. The *Dihuri* offered nine piles of *Akara* and slaughtered a big chicken in honour of *Thakuran* and a *Boke* for *Boram*. The heads of the animals were placed on the *Akara* piles and some water was poured on them. The girl for whom the ceremony was observed was bathed and made to wear a new cloth. The member lifted her and kept her feet above the head of the *Boke* which was placed on the *Akara* piles. The *Dihuri* poured some water on her feet and the water was allowed to fall on the head of the *Boke*. The *Dihuri* and the member then bowed down and prayed for health and happiness of the girl.

*Jau* cooked in a new earthen pot and curry of dried rice paste (*Ōar*) were offered to the ancestral spirits separately on leaves. No sacrifices were made for them.

The head-meat was eaten by the *Dihuri* and the unmarried boys. The member carried some of the goat meat home for his family use, and the rest was distributed among those who started cooking there. It is the custom that the meat of this ritual is neither given to any body who is not related by blood to the family concerned. Others cooking their meals at the place of worship are not to bring any cooked food home, but to eat every thing there.

**Fostering**—To prevent successive death of the children the parents may ceremonially handover their child to some body else. Usually, the child's father's younger or elder brother fosters the child. In a council

of village elders he makes his formal request to the father of the child. Taking the child to his arms he says "The children are dying with you. I am taking this child. From to day he/she belongs to me. I will take care of him and he will look to my comforts in my old age (in the case of a son) or she shall be with me till she is married and I shall "sell" her to *Sandhus* (cognates) and enjoy the bride-wealth (in the case of female-child)". The child continues to stay with his/her own parents, but the foster father feeds him/her on ceremonial and festive occasions.

A child may also be ceremonially handed-over to the villagers. The *Mahazars* (elderly men) and *Mahazaris* (old women) assemble and bathe the child. They tie a new thread around his/her neck, give him/her a new name and bless him/her. When the child grows up and before marriage the parents give a feast to the villagers and take back the possession of their child.

*First Hair Cutting*—The natal hair of the child is called '*Pap Sar*' (hair of sin). The child's mother's brother shaves the head of the child and the hair is thrown in a stream. He is entertained with delicious dishes and liquor. Some Bhuinyas may take their children to some temples and get them shaved by barbers.

### Marriage :

Marriage among the Bhuinyas is endogamous so far as the tribe as a whole is concerned. In the past marriage within the village was forbidden because the people of a village were agnates and belonged to a single clan (*Khadi*) believing to have descended from a common ancestor.

Among the Bhuinyas the name of the *Khadi* and that of the village are synonymous. Since the members of a clan are consanguinal the clan is always exogamous. Since the people of a village are of a single clan the village therefore is exogamous. Village exogamy as observed by the Bhuinyas were based on clan exogamy.



All people belonging to a single clan are not confined to a single village. The blood related families are scattered in different villages. Thus, the villages which comprise related families of a single clan are grouped together to form *Kutumba* or agnatic villages. According to the rules of clan exogamy a person cannot marry within the same clan. Any sexual union between members of a single clan is considered incestuous. But he can marry outside his own clan. The clans in which he can marry are his *Sandhu* or cognatic clans. Like the *Kutumba* or agnatic clans, the *Sandhu* or cognatic clans are also scattered in different villages. Following these principles persons of *Kutumba* villages can have marital relationship with those of their *Sandhu* villages in the Bhuinya society. With the migration of people from one village to another the Bhuinya villages have become multi-*Khuli* in composition. Though majority of people in some villages belong to a single *Khuli* of patrilineal kin but there are some matrilineally attached kin members, cognates and affines now found in these villages. In some other villages there may be families of patrilineal kin and of matrilineal affiliation living mixed together in more or less equal number. Inhabitation of families belonging to both consanguinal or *Kutumba* and affinal or *Sandhu* social units in a village has broken down village exogamy and has led to marriage between the *Kutumba* and *Sandhu* families within the same village.

Marriage outside the tribe, though quite uncommon, is never totally ruled out. Cases of Bhuinya girls marrying to Gouris could be recorded during the field investigation but such cases are extremely rare and are considered highly irregular. Child marriages are quite uncommon, and the Bhuinyas marry when both the partners are full adults. The boys usually marry after twenty years of age and the girls after the age of eighteen.

Marriage is monogamous, and after the death of the first wife one may marry again. In case the first wife proves to be barren, one has the liberty to have a second wife. Cases of persons marrying for the second time during the life time of their first wife are also occasionally encountered. In Jaldih, a Bhuinya fell in love with

his wife's younger sister and married her when the first wife was alive. In this case unfortunately the young wife died soon after the marriage. It is, therefore, not considered proper for a-Bhuiyya to have two wives at a time.

Cross-cousin marriage is not common and no preference is indicated for sororate marriages. Likewise, marriage by exchange are very rarely met with.

The following forms of marriage are prevalent among the Bhuiyyas.

1. Dharipata	..	Marriage by elopement
2. Ghicha	..	Marriage by capture
3. Phulkhusi	}	Love marriage with arrangement
4. Amlesare		
5. Kadalesare		
6. Mangi Bibha	..	Marriage by negotiation
7. Randi Bibha	..	Widow marriage

Of all forms of acquiring mate *Dharipata* and *Ghicha* marriages are the most common forms. Love marriage with arrangements (*Phulkhusi*) is only in the memory of the Bhuiyyas and there is not a single case of such marriage detected in the study villages. *Mangi-Bibha* is the most recent form of marriage which has been adopted from the caste Hindus. Very recently, in certain cases of *Mangi* form of marriage a Vaishnav or Brahmin is invited to act as the priest. This is called *Mukut Baba* since the bridal pair wear crowns (*Mukut*) made of flower during the marriage ceremony. *Mukut Baba* is still unfamiliar in hill villages, but in the plains some Bhuiyyas have adopted it to elevate their social status. The rich families living in the plains can afford to arrange *Mukut Baba*. During the field work one case of *Mukut Baba* (a girl of this village marrying in Dengula) was observed. The marriages other than *Mukut Baba* are termed as *Manakada Baba* (lit. marriage of the monkeys).

Each form of marriage is a slight modification of the *Mangi* form of marriage. However a short account of each form of marriage is given below.

1. *Dharipati*—If a boy likes a girl of certain village he goes to her village and consults with her about their marriage. Both escape and come to the boy's village. The girl is left in the outskirts of the village and the boy goes and informs his elder brother's wife and father's father's wife (even or classificatory) to bring her. The women bring her home, and kiss the chin and forehead of the boy and the girl with tumeric powder. Other rites are performed as in the case of *Mangi* form of marriage.

2. *Ghicha*—In this form of marriage the girl's parents and villagers are consulted beforehand. After they express their willingness the girl is captured by the boy and his friends either from the forest when the girl goes to pluck leaves, from the stream while taking bath, from market or fairs, on her visit to the boy's village or some other village on a dancing trip.

If the girl has to be captured from her village, then on a certain day the boy and his friends come and hide themselves in the forest. The girl's parents are informed secretly so that they send the girl without her knowledge to that part of forest with her friends to pluck leaves. There the girl is captured and taken to the boy's village. Her other friends take up a mock fight to save the girl, but in vain. They hurry back home and inform the villagers and the girl's parents that the girl was lifted by a big tiger. The villagers go to the forest and pretend to examine stones and bushes of the place from where the girl was captured and say "Here is the pug marks of the tiger! Here is some blood! Here is the torn cloth of our girl, and here is her ornament!" They then proceed to the groom's village and that day the marriage is performed. Next day the women and the girls of the bride's village pay a visit to the boy's village and they are given a feast. In this form of marriage bride-wealth is paid after two or three years of marriage. If a certain girl is captured on her visit to some village or from the market two *Khandias* (middlemen) from the groom's village go to the girl's village with sticks. Reaching

there they first go to the *Nask's* (village headman) house and say—“One cow of this village has been eaten by a tiger (or swallowed by a snake). We don't know to whom the cow belongs. The *Nask* replies “Has the cow been completely eaten or any part of it is left”. The *Khandria's* reply—“It is almost eaten, only the head or the legs are left”. The *Nask* consults the villagers and later on informs the *Khandrias* that the cow belongs to such and such person's shed. The *Khandria's* go to the girl's house and are duly welcomed. Their feet are washed in turmeric water by a lady of the girl's family and a mat and tobacco are given to them. After a short discussion with the girl's father all come to the *Darbar* and the same type of conversation is exchanged between the *Khandrias* and the villagers, as the former had with the *Nask*. Then the villagers (300 *Ghans*) say—“Any way the *Sandhu* has taken his property (A girl is thought to be the property of the *Sandhu*. She is kept in custody of the parents and when time comes she goes to the *Sandhu* after marriage). There is nothing wrong in it”. When the *Khandrias* depart, the villagers tell them—“*Age Jauntu Panda Hai, Pochhe Jauchanti Jauntu gayal, Sandhu, Samphali Tha*”. (Lit. let the pair of buffaloes meaning the two *Khandrias* go first, later on the mighty bisons meaning a party from the girls—will follow. Oh *Sandhu*, be prepared).

Next day, the villagers of the girl's village go to the groom's village and marriage takes place there. The party is entertained with meat and rice.

In this type of marriage, the girl does not get a chance to offer cakes and nut to the boys and girls of her village (*Sang Chhadir*). It is formally done to symbolise the dissociation between herself and her dormitory friends.

3. *Phulkhul*—The boys of a village go to their *Sandhu* village for a *Changu* (musical instrument) dance. There the boy puts some flower on the bun of his desired girl, and drags her

while dancing. The girl escapes. In *Ghicha* the boy with his friends capture the girl in a group, with prior intimation to her parents. In *Phulthrai*, on the other hand, the girl's parents are not consulted beforehand and the girl is dragged not by the boy's friends as a group, but by the boy himself. After the girl escapes, the boy comes back to his village and informs his parents and the villagers. After a few days the women and girls of the girl's village bring her to the boy's village for marriage.

4. *Am Lesare*—A boy and a girl may like each other. One day the boy splashes mango-juice at the girl in the forest and throws mangoes at her to get one of her ornaments. The girl escapes and goes back home. Her mother says—"You were with such and such boy, and you have lost your ornament. Why did you not go with him ? Then the *Maharis* (village women) and other girls of her village bring her to the boy's village for marriage.

5. *Kade Lesare*—It is same as *Amlesare* but in this form the boy splashes mud at the girl.

6. *Mangi Bibha*—In *Mangi Bibha* or marriage by negotiation two *Khandrias* from the groom's party go to the girl's parents. They assemble at *Darbar* and say, "We have come to take a small chicken (or a nice fruit) from your village". The villagers ask "to whom does the chicken belong ?" The *Khandrias* say the name of the girl's father. The villagers say "We shall ask him" and tell you. Then the *Khandrias* go back. In this way they come for five or six times to the girl's village till the proposal is finalized. In *Pauri* areas the *Khandrias* receive some rice and liquor from the groom's family every time at the time of their return home. But in other areas, the *Khandrias* are fed by the girl's family on every visit.

The following is a brief description of the various steps of *Mangi Marriage* :—

1. *Phul Handi*—When the day on which the bride is to be taken is fixed, the *Khandrias* inform this to the groom's party. Two or three days prior to this day the groom's party sends *Phul Handi*, painted with rice paste and containing paddy and rice, Gur, flat rice, comb, mirror and flower for the bride. A ring is also sent for her by the groom which the girls of the bride's village put on her finger. The groom's relatives come halfway to the girl's village while sending the *Phul handi*. 2½ *Khandi* of rice (in big *Pa*) is also sent this day by the *Khandrias* for cooking *Bile Jau* in the bride's village. When the *Khandrias* arrive in the bride's village the *Mahataris* go with the bride to receive them. The girls sing song and the *Khandrias* are brought to the bride's house.
2. *Tel Haldi*—That night seven women anoint oil on the girl's head. The girl holds seven straws fixed to her forehead and the *Mahataris* pour oil seven times on the straws with *Huthula* sound.
3. *Dia Mangula*—The *Mahataris* go in the four directions at the outskirts of village next day with the bride and offer homage to *Pat*, *Dharam Dena*, *Basumata* and *Gumari*, for a successful marriage.
4. That day again *Tel Haldi* ritual is repeated by seven women.
5. *Cooking Bile Jau*—Rice brought from the groom's village is distributed and given to all families for cooking. They cook and bring the cooked rice back to the *Darbar*. Here, the cooked rice is distributed to all members of the village.

6. *Taking the Bride*—One *Khandia* from the groom's party and one from the bride's village leave earlier for the groom's village to arrange food for the girls party. Two others remain to take the bride. After the party reaches the groom's village they are given food and water. Each party ceremonially greets each other asking about their health and happiness. The girls of the bride's village sing marriage songs. The groom's mother or his father's brother's wife carries her on her back to the *Darbar* house.
7. *Ghorur Pani*—The bride and the groom are given ceremonial bath by the women of their respective villages on the *Dobari* of the village (Where two paths bifurcate).
8. *Jual Pani*—The bride and the groom are given a ceremonial bath. They are made to sit on 'yokes. The women of the groom's village bathe the bride, while those belonging to the bride's village bathe the groom. The groom does not go out of his house on the night the bride is brought to his village for marriage.
9. *Selling Medicine (Ase Bha)* :—The women and girl of the bride's village dress themselves as monks. They start from the *Darbar* house to the *Khande Sai* (kitchen house) to sell 'medicines'. Vulgar talks and jokes relating to sex are exchanged between the women and the boys. The boys give two *Pai* of rice to them. They again go to the groom's village and get another two *Pai* of rice. Cakes are prepared out of these four *Pai* of rice and distributed among them afterwards.
10. *Safe Bidha*—In a formal ceremony, the women of the groom's village and his relatives make gifts of money to the bridal pair and to the *Gohela's* (partners of the groom and the bride). The bride's younger brother pats on the

back of the groom and is given a piece of cloth by the groom. He carries the groom on his back, and the groom's younger brother carries the bride on his back. Both dance for a few minutes.

11. *Kada lata* :—When the women relatives present gifts to the bridal pair on the marriage altar, the persons who are in joking relationship with one another throw mud and cowdung water, ashes and black-dyes. A lot of fun and joke is thus exchanged between them at each other.
12. *Ceremonial Bath and Breaking the Bow*—The women and the girls of the bride's village take the bride and the groom to the stream for a bath. There the bride hides the jar under water and the groom finds it out. The groom also hides it and the bride finds it out. This is called "*Doð Dubs*". The bride carries a potful of water on her head on the way back home. The boys of the bride's village make a strong bow with '*Sai*' branch and '*Ponasi*' string. The groom shoots at the water pitcher carried by the bride and breaks the bow and throws it away. He should break it at one attempt, otherwise he is not considered strong.
13. *Mandí Sara*—The bride and the women of her and the groom's villages husk about three to four *Pai* of paddy after the bride returns from the stream. She cooks '*Jau*' out of this rice and offers it to the family ancestors of the groom at the family shrine. The persons of both sides eat a little of this *Jau*.
14. "*Kanya Samarpan*" (*Handing over the bride to the Bandhus by the bride's villagers*)—At the parting time the girl's villagers and some of her close relatives handover the bride to the groom's villagers and say—"*Oh*" respected *Bandhus*, now you get your daughter-in-law. When she was young she was of her parents, but after her puberty she belonged to



the village (300-Ghar). Now we 300-Ghar are giving her away to you. She may be ugly or beautiful, blind or one-eyed, deaf or dumb or lame, she might be a witch or sorceress (*Daini* or *Pangini*) she may not know how to cook, how to talk, and how to respect you. Any way, she becomes your *Bahu* (Daughter-in-law) now. If she does anything harm to you, or she is not liked by you, don't let her wander shed to shed (begging food) but bring her back to the same tree (to her parents) where from you have taken her". The groom's villagers reply, "Oh ! *Bandhu*. She may have anything which goes against her, but she is our *Bahu* now. She is not only your daughter, ours too. Unless she does serious offence should we bring her to you ?

15. *Gundi Chaul and Mand Chhel*—When the bride's villagers leave after marriage the groom's party gives them about five *Pai* of rice (called *Gundi Chaul*) and one goat (*Mand Chhel*) to arrange a feast and enjoy themselves.
16. *Consumation of Marriage*—Before the boy and the girl start sleeping together (after three or four days of marriage) the bride cooks a little '*Jau*' in a new earthen-pot and offers it to the ancestors at the family altar in the *Bhitar*. At night the groom's elder brother's wife (own or classificatory) bring the groom and the bride to the house and say—From today you (meaning groom) get your home (wife) Start building your shed (lit. have sons and daughters) and let your family prosper".
17. *First Visit of the girl and the boy to the girl's parents*—On their first visit to bride's parents, they are given hearty meals. On the parting day a chicken is killed for them and they may be given new clothes, cakes and cooked rice which they carry to their village.

### Bride Wealth :

Bride wealth is same for any type of marriage and is paid within a year or two. But in the case of *Dhanipate* it may be paid after 5 to 10 years when the persons accumulate enough to pay it. In the case of extremely poor persons, they may be exempted to pay full amount of bride-price. The bride's father, her father's younger brother and mother's brother go to the groom and collect their share of bride-wealth.

### Economy in Pauri Bhuinya Marriage :

Ceremonies are most expensive among the Pauri Bhuinyas. Contribution from the relatives are negligible and the parents start saving little by little in the form of cash and crop from five years or more for financing a marriage. In spite of their efforts they run into debt to meet the marriage expenses. A considerable amount is spent in feasts and a sizable amount in the payment of bride-wealth (*Mula*) paid to the bride's relatives.

The items and amount of bride-wealth are same for all types of marriages. Item-wise detailed list of the bride-wealth paid in Bhuinya marriages is given below—

- (1) One bullock for the bride's father.
- (2) One bullock for her father's younger brother.
- (3) One bullock for her mother's brother.
- (4) Three rupees and about 12 *Pai* of rice for the *Khandries* (middlemen).
- (5) About 7½ *Khandi* of rice for *Bila Jau*.
- (6) One rupee and a *Sari* for the bride's mother.
- (7) About 5 *Pai* of rice (*Gundi Chaul*) and a goat (*Mand Chhal*) for the bride's villagers when they leave after marriage.

A piece of cloth or one or two rupees in lieu of cloth is paid to the bride's younger brother (*Sala Bidha*) but this does not constitute an item of the regular bride-wealth.

Feasts arranged during marriage drain away major savings of the family. In a marriage feast the groom's party is expected to feed the villagers of both sides sumptuously. The groom has to spend on feasts several times as follows :—

- (1) The day on which the bride is brought for marriage the boys and the girls of the groom's village are fed properly to receive the marriage party.
- (2) As soon as the bride and her escorts arrive at the groom's village they are given cooked rice and Dal.
- (3) That night after the girl's party reach the groom's village they are fed by the groom.
- (4) Next day goats are slaughtered and the villagers of both the sides are given a hearty meal.
- (5) After the marriage, on some day, the groom is obliged to feed his villagers once more for their co-operation and help in the marriage.

Besides the above occasions, quite a heavy stock of rice is also required by the groom to feed the guests and relatives who visit him for the marriage. To all these expenses may be added other miscellaneous expenses like purchase of new clothes for the bridal pair and the relatives, ornaments for the bride, rice given to the different age and sex groups for playing their specific roles in marriages.

Keeping in view all the items of expenditure the total amount spent in a regular Bhuiya marriage (marriage by arrangement) is estimated to be of the order of Rs.1000/- or more. In other forms of marriages less amount is spent on feasting, there by reducing the total expenditure to about Rs.200/-. In the case of second marriage, the bride-wealth is more than the usual bride-wealth.

## Conclusion :

Without going into the details of the rites, and rituals of the institution of marriage, it is significant to analyse the role which it plays among the tribe. Its implications on the interplay of social relationship, group ties, and other social and economic ramifications are noteworthy.

Marriage is always viewed more as an affair of the village than as an exclusive concern of the concerned family. The unmarried girls though biologically belong to their parents, but sociologically all the unmarried girls are viewed to be the "property" of the *Sandhus*. They are kept in custody of their parents and taken care of till marriage, but as soon as the *Sandhus* want to take possession of their "property", the parents are obliged to part with them.

In a broader sense all the unmarried boys and girls are viewed to be the members of the village and the village youth dormitory. In the case of giving away the girls in marriage, the opinion of the village elders is never overlooked. Likewise marriage of the boys is the responsibility of all the families of the village. The parents finance the marriage, but the villagers lend their help and co-operation to make the marriage ceremony a success. While ceremonially handing over the bride villagers of the bride make an appeal to the groom's villagers and say that they offer the girl in marriage not only to the groom, but also to his villagers at large for the proper upkeep of the girl. In the case of divorce, therefore, the groom's villagers formally handover the girl to her village elders while performing formally the ritual concerning divorce.

Marriage is the proper situation to study the roles played by different age and sex groups. The elderly men (*Mahetar*) and women (*Mahetan*) and the unmarried boys (*Bhandis*) and girls (*Bhandis*) play specific roles in marriage. The *Mahetars* work as marriage brokers (*Khandris*), fix up marriage properly and formally handover and take over the bride in marriage and engage

themselves in communal cooking. The ceremonial rites are mostly performed by the *Mahataris*. Ceremonial bathing of the bridal pair, greetings to the marriage party, blessings offered to the marrying couple, are performed by the women. Marriage is the only occasion where women have greater roles to play than men. Likewise, the unmarried boys and the girls are closely associated with the marriage ceremony. The boys play on *Chango* (musical drum) in marriage dance, prepare marriage bow for the groom, supply firewood, fetch water and help in cooking the marriage feast, while the girls sing marriage songs, grind spices, supply leaf-cups and plates and accompany the bride while performing marriage rites. For performing their duties, each group is reasonably offered food and gifts.

An analysis of some of the marriage rites of the Paur-Bhuiyas throws light on their social values and belief system. As they claim to have descended from royal chiefs, the tradition of riding on horse back is still retained by them. It is still customary for the Bhuiyas to carry the bride and the groom on their backs, which symbolizes horse-riding and after marriage the rice and dal paid to the persons carrying the bride and the groom is called *Ghage Dana* (lit, fodder for the horse). Likewise, the breaking of the bow by the groom and shooting arrows are claimed to be the imitation of the epic custom of Rama breaking *Shive Dhanu* for marrying Sita. Bathing the bride and the groom, making them sit on a yoke symbolize that from that day they are to share and shoulder the responsibilities of the marital life. The Bhuiya, like many other tribes have great attachment to their native soil, and this sentiment has been reflected in their marriage in which the women of the bride's village worship the *Dharu* (Earth Goddess) and tie some earth in the cloth of the bride.

Marriage marks the termination of the one phase of life and a beginning of a new sphere of life. The married couple cease to be members of their youth association and attain the status of the married persons (*Mahataris* and *Mahataris*). Before assuming the new roles and responsibilities, the bride and the

groom present gifts to their dormitory friends and formally take farewell from their association. They are also entertained with feasts by their friends before their final withdrawal from the dormitory organization.

In case of the bride, she not only steps on to a new social position from *Dhangdi* to *Mabauri*, but it is more significant for her to enter into the clan of her husband. To mark this transition the bride cooks *Jau* (porridge) on the marriage day and offers it to the family ancestors of the groom at the sacred *Bahar*. Likewise, to mark the consummation of marriage, before the couple start sleeping together the wife offers *Jau* to the ancestors of her husband.

Marriage sample collected from Jaldih reveals that marriage by capture and elopement, are more in number than the arranged and more expensive form of marriage. Out of 141 marriage cases, 36.2 per cent are arranged marriage while 63.8 per cent are other types of marriage. The following table gives the number of different types of marriages held in Jaldih village.

TABLE No. 7

*Frequency and percentage of types of marriages among the Pauli Bhuiya of Jaldih village.*

Sl. No.	Type of marriage (local names)	English equivalent	Frequency	Percentage
1	Mangi ..	Marriage by arrangement.	51	36.2
2	Ghicha ..	Marriage by capture	36	25.5
3	Dharipala ..	Marriage by Elopement	51	36.2
4	Randi Bhibha ..	Widow remarriage ..	3	2.1
Total ..			141	100

As marriage is an expensive affair and many Pauri families cannot afford to meet the marriage expenses many Bhuinya youths are forced to lead the life of bachelors and spinners. The heavy expenditure was minimized to some extent in the olden days when less expensive forms of marriage such as marriage by capture or by elopement was prevalent in significant number without any stigma attached to such modes of acquiring mates. But such forms of marriage are now-a-days more looked down upon than what was the case formerly and therefore many Bhuinya youths whose economic condition has not improved in any significant manner are forced to remain unmarried. In village Tantara, it was found in 1969 that 19 girls of ages between 20 and 56 years and 19 boys above 22 years of age were unmarried on account of financial difficulties. They did not like to take recourse to marriage by capture or elopement lest they might be looked down upon by their fellow villagers and neighbours. This has serious social consequences and unless the bride price of the Bhuinya is curtailed and other steps are taken to liberalize the terms and conditions of marriage, the Bhuinya youths may not be able to enjoy the status of full-fledged member of their society in their life time.

### Death Rites :

The Pauri Bhuinyas believe that death occurs due to ill temper of hostile spirits, gods and goddesses, and due to the play of black magic. The fact that nobody can escape death is well known to them, and when death occurs the Pauris make necessary preparations for proper disposal of the dead.

When a person dies his kinsmen and near relative start wailing loudly, till the corpse is taken to the burial ground. The wailing signifies the heart felt sorrow of the relatives for whom the death of their near and dear one was extremely frustrating. It is also believed that if the relatives do not lament for the dead, the latter may feel offended in the other world. Both *Bandhor* (cognates) and *Kurumbas* (agnates) carry the corpse to the burial ground. A pit of about seven feet long

and five feet deep is dug and the corpse is laid down on its left with the head facing north. The eldest son and in his absence the brother of the deceased puts the first handful of earth on the corpse following which others fill up the pit with clods of earth. Stones and thorny branches are put on the grave so that wolves and dogs do not open it and disturb the corpse. Some of the possessions of the deceased like a mat, one or two pieces of clothes, a pitcher or a gourd, an axe, a bow and an arrow are left with the deceased in the pit. If the deceased is a woman all her jewellery except the gold and silver ones are all buried with the dead body. It is believed that the dead needs all the things of daily use in the other world and if these things are not given the spirit of the dead might visit its descendants and press for such things. After the dead body is buried the members of the deceased family and their relatives pray as follows :

"As long as you were in this world, we shared a common life, but now death has separated you from us, please go and tell the Yama (the God of Death) that you were the only person of the world and after you died there is nobody else left here".

When a pregnant woman dies special rites are performed for her burial. To prevent the sorcerers practising black magic through the medium of foetus, the Pauris draw seven lines on the womb of the deceased before she is buried. Such cases of death amount to serious social offence called *Stri Hatya* (lit. woman-slaughter) and the family members remain socially outcasted until they can afford to summon the *Bar* (wider tribal organization) council to perform necessary ritual purification. Persons killed by bear and tiger are believed to turn into malevolent spirits. Especially the tiger spirits (*Baphia Bhuta*) create great havoc and kill human beings in the disguise of tigers. When somebody is killed by a tiger the *Raula* is called on to perform special rites in the burial ground while burying the dead body. Idols of the tiger and the dead are made of earth and the *Raula* propitiates them by slaughtering a *Boka*. The heads of both



the idols are cut and these along with the head of the slaughtered animal are thrown into the flowing stream. This prevents further attack of the *Baghe Shora*.

The pollution period lasts for two to three days. At the end the villagers are entertained with a small feast. During the pollution period all the families of the deceased's lineage and also *Sandhu* families throw away their old and used earthen cooking pots. Mats and other household articles are all washed in water. The clothes are also properly washed or given to a washerman for washing. On the final purification day all the members of the lineage clip their hair and shave their beard and pare their nails. During the period of pollution they refrain from eating any non-vegetarian dishes and anointing their bodies with oil.

#### Calling back Soul home (*Jiba Ande*) :

The Pauri Bhuiyyas believe that life does not come to an end with death. It only separates a person physically from his kith and kin but the deceased continues to dominate the sacred world and lives in the form of a spirit and always watch over the activities of the two family members, whom he left behind. With the passing away from the mortal world the spirit of the dead takes seat in the sacred *Shitar* of the family and is duly propitiated on festive occasions. By virtue of its higher position as a supernatural and superhuman being the ancestral spirit commands respect and reverence from the living descendants who try to maintain a harmonious relationship with their ancestral spirits.

The spirit of all the dead persons cannot attain the status of ancestral spirits (*jibu*) and therefore can not have a seat in the sacred *Shitar*. A person killed by tiger, bear and snake-bite anyone who died of serious diseases like cholera, small-pox and leprosy, a woman dying with the baby in her womb; any person who committed suicide; and any one who died unmarried do not constitute the ancestral spirits of the Pauris. After death

the souls of these persons float in the air or are changed to hostile spirits having their abode in the woods and forests, and causing illness in the villagers. On the other hand the souls of the persons who die a normal death are ceremonially invited to the *Bhitar* and are propitiated periodically. Such ancestral spirits are benevolent in nature and unless they are offended they safeguard the interest of their descendants and keep them and their livestock in good health and give them prosperity and happiness.

The day on which the shade of the deceased is brought home, a goat is slaughtered in front of the deceased's house and is offered to the family ancestors. A few drops of blood and some meat are cooked in a new earthen pot which is called *Airs Handi* (pot containing non-vegetarian dishes). The son of the deceased or any other male relative observes fasting for the whole day and remains seated inside the *Mulaphar*. At sun set seven villagers with a basketful of rice, flour, the *Airhandi*, two pieces of *Sal* and a piece of *Kendu* stick proceed from the deceased's house towards the graveyard. On the way where two paths meet or diverge they plaster a perch with water and fix up the three sticks in the form of a tripod. The pot with cooked meat is kept on the tripod in honour of the deceased and the same is broken in a single blow by striking it with a stick. As the pot breaks the persons call loudly addressing the deceased to come with them and enter the *Bhitar*. They say "Where are you? May you be under rocks and stones and behind the bushes and trees. Please come and take your seat in our house (*Bhitar*)". It is believed that being attracted by the smell of the mutton the spirit of the dead comes to the spot and enters into the basket filled with rice flour. Poor families may put fish and *Biri Dal* in the *Airs Handi* in the place of meat curry. Calling the spirit seven times the *Bhulnyas* draw some impression on the rice flour with thorny branches or with fingers and carry the basket back home bearing two pieces of iron rods or sickle together. Reaching home they beat the roof of the house and those inside the house ask

"what have you brought?" The persons reply "We have banished sickness and brought health and happiness". Then they enter the house and all assemble to examine the foot prints of the spirit on the rice flour. The man on fast cooks some meat of the goat slaughtered for the purpose. Meat, curry, rice, cakes and Jau are offered to the ancestral spirits including the new comer at the sacred altar of the Shikar. Then he first takes some of the offered food. Following him others start eating. The extra meat and the cooked rice should not be stored for the next day, but be all eaten or thrown away.

The shade of the dead is brought home on the third or fifth or seventh day. Until the soul calling ceremony is performed the deceased's son or brother offers rice to the spirit at the outskirts of the village. After the soul of the deceased is brought home, the deceased family and all others, agnates and cognates become free from death pollution and resume their normal activities.

## CHAPTER VI

### YOUTH ORGANIZATION

Bachelor's dormitory, a traditional educational institution was once in existence in many tribal communities. But it is fast disappearing as a result of the impact of modern forces. The tribes such as the Hill Juangs and the Hill Bhainyas are singular exceptions who have maintained the bachelor's dormitory in all its fullness and originality. Wherever the tribes have been in contact with the non-tribals and other agencies of change like the Juangs of Dhenkanal and the Bhainyas of Sedar Subdivision of Sundergarh district, bachelor's dormitory among these people have disappeared. The youth organization and bachelor's dormitory is prevalent among the Pauris of interior areas of Kejri region of Bonai, have been described below.

The unmarried boys above 14 years and the unmarried girls above 12 years of age constitute the formal members of the youth dormitory. The boys are called *Dhangada* and the girls as *Dhangdi*. The unmarried boys and girls taken together as a group are called *Sunderphol* (lit, red flowers), and their association centres around the *Mandaghar* as it is called in Keonjhar and Darbargarh, in Sundergarh. The *Mandaghar* is by far the most commodious but preferably constructed in a central position of the village. The boys sleep in this dormitory house, whereas the girls do not have any such special hut to serve as the girl's dormitory. They usually sleep in the house of a widow of the village or in different houses according to their convenience. But for other purposes their activities are associated with the male dormitory house of the village. The boys take care of thatching and repairing of the dormitory whereas the girls do the cleaning, plastering its walls and floor and sweeping the plaza. A fire is kept burning day and night in the centre of the house for which the logs are brought by the boys. On its four walls hung *Chang* or the tambourines played on by the boys during dance. In a portion of the dormitory are kept bundles of grains and cereals on a raised wooden platform. The boys sleep around the fire keeping their feet towards the flame to drive out cold during winter.

Admission into the dormitory does not require any special rites and rituals. All the boys and girls of proper age-group who are able to contribute to the common fund of the dormitory are taken as its members.

Within the framework of the dormitory organization the *Dhangades* and *Dhangdis* have specific roles and responsibilities. The former bring logs of wood for the sacred fire of the dormitory. As indicated above, the fire is kept burning throughout the year, otherwise if it is extinguished it is believed to bring ill luck to the village. During marriage they fetch firewood for the groom's family and help in drawing water, cooking marriage feast, accompanying the bride to the groom's village with *Chengu*. They also help in cooking the communal feasts on other occasions. The repairing and thatching of the dormitory is the responsibility of the boys who either do so by themselves or take the help of the elders of the village to get it done. When any visitor stays in a Pauri village, the boys take care of him by supplying firewood and water for cooking his meals. During the visit of *Bandhu* (cognatic) girls to their village it is the responsibility of the boys to raise contributions and collect grains and other food materials to feed the girls during their stay in the village. The unmarried boys and girls constitute an effective working potential who may be hired by any villager to work on his field on payment of cash or kind. If they so desire, the boys and girls may also cultivate patches of land jointly and utilize the yield for their common purposes. In some important village rituals the boys and girls are required to contribute a goat by raising contributions from among them. To add to all these it is the duty of the boys and girls to keep *Chengu* dance going during feasts and festivals.

Like the boys, the girls too have their specific rites and duties as members of the dormitory. It is the duty of the girls to plaster the dormitory and sweep the plaza ordinarily once in every week and positively on important occasions like marriage village festivals and during the visit of Government officers

to the village. In some villages, they supply sleeping mats of date palm leaves to the boys and in return the boys supply them with firewood for their sleeping apartment. During marriage, and when a visitor halts in the village the girls supply leaf-cups and plates, grind spices for the marriage feast, and fetch water. In marriage, the girls accompany the bride to the groom's village and sing marriage songs. When boys of a *Bandhu* village pay a visit, it is the responsibility of the girls of the village to look after them and arrange for their food.

The association of the boys and the girls confers communal responsibility. For the fault of any individual member of the dormitory the whole group of the boys or girls is held responsible. For negligence of their duties the boys or girls are fined by the village elders, the fine being a few measures of grains and a goat for any major offence or liquor worth four to five rupees for minor offence.

#### Association of the *Bandhu* boys and girls :

The boys and girls of a village are supposed to be of the same *Khili* and therefore they consider each other as brothers and sisters. In such a situation joking, funmaking and exchange of gifts are not possible among themselves. The boys and girls, therefore, exchange gifts with the girls and boys of *Bandhu* villages. In fairs or market places the boys offer presents of *Gurakhu* (tobacco-paste), fried rice, comb, mirror and ribbon to the *Bandhu* girls who reciprocate with gifts of cakes, flat-rice and tobacco leaves to the boys. They usually purchase the gifts after raising contributions, from among themselves and tie those to the cloth of the receiver. While reciprocating the boy and the girl exchange hearty and joking remarks with each other. Each party tries to address the other party in superlative terms and place the self in the most insignificant position. A boy always addresses a girl as princess and refer to himself as an untouchable. Similarly a girl address a boy as king and calls herself as an untouchable. While giving away the gifts the boy tell the girl.

"Oh, dear princess, the untouchable is making you an offer of a bunch of flowers (meaning the gifts). If you so appreciate, then adorn yourself with them. Otherwise, throw them in the stream." The girl in return reply. "Oh, boy, you are the prince and I am an untouchable. Why should I throw away your kind gift? It is the most prized thing I have been looking for". On the day of a ritual observed by the Pauris the boys collect honey from the jungle and the girls make cakes. Honey and cakes are exchanged between *Sandhu* boys and girls on this day.

### Dancing Trips :

After the exchange of gifts for a couple of times, the boys and girls invite each other to visit their villages for *Chango* dance. When a party of *Sandhu* boys arrive, they send a message to the girls of the village who meet the former in the house of a widow and greet them enquiring about their health and happiness. The boys reply jokingly that they are not well and some of them are suffering from fever, some have injured their legs on their way to the village, some have been attacked by bears and tigers, and the like and ask about the health and happiness of the girls. The girls also reply in similar fashion. The gift brought by the boys is distributed among all the dormitory members and the visitors are supplied with tobacco and *Saf* leaves by the girls for smoking.

When the girls intend to visit a village they first discuss it with the widows and a suitable day is fixed. The girls make prior arrangements and collect rice for preparing cakes, tobacco and other articles to carry with them for the *Sandhu* boys. On reaching the village they take shelter in the house of some widows or any relative where the boys meet them, greet each other and accept the gifts.

During the visit of boys or girls, *Chango* dance goes on day and night and the boys try to irritate the girls through the songs and the girls respond to it by rhythm and stepping of their dance. A lot of fun and jokes are thus exchanged between

them to make the dance more lively. At the dead of the night after the village elders retire for sleep, the boys and girls may pair off and go to some secluded places where the girl massages the boy. The visitors are provided with food by the boys and girls of the village. The requirement is met by raising contribution from the dormitory members or from their common stock of grain, if any. In the case of scarcity, they may get a loan from somebody promising to pay it back by working on his field. Ordinarily the guests are provided with rice and *Dal*, but on the parting day a goat or sheep is slaughtered for them. At the time of departure the boys or the girls at the case may be walk certain distance with their *Bandhu* friends to see them off. The girls sing *Dodi* songs on the way and at the time of parting and one party, tells the other party in jest.

—Farewell friends, do not wish to come to this village again. We could not feed you, properly. Tell others that no rice is available in our village and we fed you with only roots and tubers". The other party replies that their stay was most comfortable and they were provided with sumptuous food. One party requests the other not to call their names at the back and expresses gratitude for the trouble taken in arranging food and making the stay comfortable.

During the visit of the girls one or more girls may be captured for marriage and intimation is sent to their parents afterwards. But with the changed circumstances this practice is becoming rare day by day. Cultural contact between the Bhuiyars and the non-tribals and increasing mobility and development of road communication have all combined at the present time to weaken the dormitory organization and disintegrate the *Chango* dance and music.

**Retirement from the membership of Dormitory (Sang Chhada).**

Membership in a dormitory terminates with marriage and after marriage a boy or a girl ceases to be a formal member of the dormitory. After the marriage proposal is finalized and before



the commencement of marriage the dormitory members collect grains and other things from among themselves and provide a hearty feast to the departing member, bid farewell and wish good luck and happy days in the next phases of life. This rite is called *Sang Chhade* (i.e. departing companionship). In the case of a boy he offers puffed rice, sweets, combs, mirrors, and tobacco-paste to his dormitory friends on the occasion of his farewell ceremony. Likewise, a girl offers cakes, tobacco, flower and a new mat for the boys. Some elderly *Mahataris* (married women) act as intermediaries between them when the gifts are made over to the dormitory members. In the case of a girl the *Mahataris* offer the gifts to the boys and say.

--Oh boys, accept the small gift of your sister. Till to-day the girl was a member of the dormitory. She might not have fulfilled her duties regularly and might have offended you. She now begs that she may be pardoned for all her lapses. Now the time has come for her to leave your association and build her own house. Eat the cakes which she has prepared for you and sleep on the mat which she has made for you".

The boys accept the gifts and reply

--She was never a bad girl and has not done any thing wrong. Rather we might have done some injustice to her, for which she may forgive us. She was very nice to us, she liked us and has prepared cakes for us. Now the *Sandhus* have come to take her from us. Let her be happy in her new home".

The girl then sings some melodious marriage songs in weeping fashion and greets the boys by making *Juar* (bowing down) to all. The same procedure is followed for bidding farewell to a boy. That night all enjoy grand feast arranged by other members of the dormitory and *Changu* dance is held to mark the parting ceremony.

## Functions of the Dormitory :

The institution of dormitory occupies a key position in Pauri society and plays a significant role in sociocultural life of the people. In fact all phases of Pauri life—social, economic, educational, political and religious centre around this institution. Among others, the most important functions of the dormitory are stated below.

(1) Dormitory provides sleeping accommodation to the unmarried boys of the village and for the guests and relatives during their stay in the village.

(2) The dormitory serves as a meeting ground where the village elders assemble every morning and evening, around the fire place and discuss matters relating to the village.

(3) Educative role of the dormitory is immense. Here the boys are taught rhythms of *Chang* steps of dance, and folk tales and legends. They are taught the habits of discipline, manners and etiquette regarding behaviour towards senior members of the dormitory and elders of the village. Dormitory provides opportunities for boys and girls to develop in them a sense of responsibility, awareness towards their duties and inculcates in the young people the duty of loyalty and norms and values of their society. This institution provides training to the boys and girls on the art of co-operation, fellow feeling and hospitality.

(4) The life in a dormitory inspires not only its members but also prepares the boys and girls to take up economic pursuits and become successful earning members of the society. The boys and girls cultivate patches of forest land and store the produce in a common fund to feed the guests and visitors to spend on gifts and to meet their own expenses. They also provide labour to those who need their help in agricultural operations.

(5) The dormitory serves as grain-gods of the village. In a portion of the dormitory is built a raised wooden platform on which are kept straw packs containing paddy, husked rice, pulses and cereals. These may belong to the common stock of the village and of the dormitory members.

(6) The plaza or the open ground in front of the dormitory is used as a court where open sessions are held by the village elders to discuss the current affairs of the society and other topics of interest, to take decisions on important issues, quarrels and conflicts. Topics like selection of day and time for performing village rituals, marriage proposals, selection of hill-slopes for shifting cultivation are discussed at the *Darbar*.

(7) Dormitory house is used as a kitchen. The food for the guests and relatives and for the dormitory members of other villages coming on dancing trips is cooked in the dormitory. During community rituals the consecrated rice grains and the sacrificial meat are cooked by the *Dituni* of the village in the dormitory. Some of the marriage feasts are also cooked either in the dormitory or close to it in the plaza.

(8) *Darbarghar* is a sacred institution. In some village the goddess *Thakuran* takes her seat in an inner apartment constructed in one of the corners of the dormitory. Besides the deities connected with *Changu* and other kinds of drums are believed to reside in the dormitory. Close to the dormitory is usually installed the sacred pillar of *Gaiki*, the village tutelary deity. During religious ceremonies the *Dituni* and others of the village start their procession from the dormitory. During their menstrual cycle the women are not allowed to enter the *Darbar* lest the deities will be defiled.

(9) The last but the main function of the dormitory is essentially recreational in nature. The musical instruments are kept hanging on the dormitory walls and the dance is performed in front of it on an open ground. In order to forget the worries

and tribulations of life, the Paurl youths, after their day's toil engage themselves in dancing and singing from the evening to the late hours of the night. On marriage occasions, the boys and girls of the bride's village visit the groom's village and take part in dancing competition. The *Changu* dance performed by the boys and girls of *Banathu* villages is more lively than that which is held by the boys and girls of the same village. The reason for this is obvious. In the former case the boys and the girls being not related as affines to one another can joke and make fun with each other in course of dancing and singing while in the latter case the boys and girls being related to one another by consanguinity are forbidden to cut jokes with each other.

It has been indicated earlier that the dormitory organization is in the process of disintegration and with it also the *Changu* dance which is an integral part of the dormitory, is meeting the same fate. Both the dormitory and the *Changu* dance made the life of young people of the Paurl society most glamorous and colourful. But with the gradual decay of the dormitory complex the boys and girls have almost lost their artistry, joy in life and aesthetic qualities which distinguished them from their dull grief stricken and charmless counterparts of the plains. As indicated above the dormitory functioned as a school where youths were initiated into tribal tradition and the art of community living. But with the gradual passing away of this institution vacuum is created in the sphere of education. The reasons of disintegration of the *Darbar* complex are many. During the earlier dispensation of the ruling chief of Bonai State the Dewan took a poor view of the Paurl life and looked askance at the picturesque custom of dance of boys and girls together. He asked the Paurls to stop such dances where by in some villages the dancing and singing was given up. After the merger of the State with other parts of Orissa roads were built to connect the backward and interior areas with the developed areas in the plains. Such road communications facilitated frequent visits of officials and people from the plains to the Paurl areas.

Such visits resulted in cultural contact between the primitive Pauris and the advanced Hindus. Land survey and settlement in the Pauri area changed land holding system from communal ownership to private ownership. Prospective geological explorations identified areas of mineral deposits and thereafter establishments of mining and industrial complexes followed in the Pauri country. Administrative machinery stretched its tentacles into these inaccessible areas. Slowly but steadily the people of these areas were drawn to the Vertex of civilization. In a nutshell all these forces have combined to alienate their people from their cultural tradition and disintegrate their traditional institutions. With the penetration of political modernization and socio-economic change into the Pauri area the current tendency seems to be an ambivalent attitude towards the values current in the modern society, some are inwardly accepted, even while there is an idealization of the Pauri's ancient culture not for the preservation of their cultural heritage but largely for gaining political privilege.

## CHAPTER VII

### SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Essentially social organization appears as a complex process by which groups of people within societies relate themselves to each other in a net-work of relationship based on consanguinity and affinity or differentiate themselves from each other in the settling of available resources. In other words, a social organization is a set of members related to each other in ways that facilitate the carrying out of activities characteristic of a particular society. Social organization can be viewed structurally, in terms of the various activities by means of which it is maintained. Elaborating the concept concerning the social organization a little further, a kin group belonging to a patrilineal clan can be viewed structurally as a kind of social alignment. This kin group can also be viewed functionally in terms of the behaviours expected from and exhibited by the members who comprise the society. The social structure and organization of the Pauri Bhuinyas are described in this chapter both structurally and functionally.

#### Family :

Family is the smallest social unit. Among the Pauri Bhuinyas it is patrilineal. It consists of members who are related to each other both by marriage and by birth. The former relationship exists between the husband and the wife, while the blood ties exist between father and son, brother and sister and the like. Members related to each other by blood are called agnates or consanguinal kins while the relations determined by marriage are known as cognates or affinal kins. Marriage is strictly prohibited among the agnatic kins. For matrimonial purposes spouses are always selected from cognatic groups. As the family is patrilineal the descent is always counted through the male line from father to son. A daughter is regarded as the member of her father's *Khili* (extended lineage group) so long as she is unmarried, but after marriage she becomes a full-fledged member of her husband's family. Even in the rare cases, when a Bhuinya adopts a son-in-law in the absence of any son of his own the

basic structure of the family remains unaffected in the sense that the son-in-law is not included in the *Kh/W* of his father-in-law. The adopted son-in-law takes care of his father-in-law in his old age and inherits all his property. Even then he does not qualify himself to be counted in the family line of descent of his father-in-law.

Property is always inherited by the sons after the death of the father. It is equally distributed among all the sons, except the eldest one who gets a little more than others. When a Bhuinya dies without leaving any son, the property cannot be claimed by his married daughters, but by his close agnates such as brothers, father's brothers, or father's brother's sons, living either in joint families, or separate families. In case such relations cannot be traced out the property is enjoyed by the tribal community at large. Such cases are referred to the *Sav* (inter-village council) which is attended by the headmen of different villages. They assemble at an appointed place on the appointed time and discuss the matter and arrange a feast by disposing off the properties of the deceased.

The Pauri families are patrilocal. The daughters continue to be regarded as members of their father's family for a temporary phase till they marry and leave their parents. After they are married they live in the villages of their husband. In the case of the sons they stay with their parents and even after their partition. They continue to have links for ever with their parents and also with one another, in all social, economic and religious matters. They take care of their parents in old age and inherit their father's properties after his death.

The eldest male member of the family is considered the family head. He is usually the father in a nuclear and extended family or eldest brother in a joint family where the father is dead. The father being the family head exercises considerable authority over all the members of the family and all others are expected to obey him. The father owns the property which is not divided during his life time, even if the sons establish their independent households. After the death of the father the widow mother neither owns property

nor is viewed as the family head. In fact the authority vested in the father descends down to his eldest son. The family head exercises considerable authority, but in no case he is the totalitarian head. Before taking up any decision it is customary for the family head to discuss the issue with other members of the family and take their suggestions and views into consideration. In all cases he takes the consent of other members of his family before he does anything concerning the whole family. The families of the Pauri Bhuiyyas can be classified into four groups, i.e., nuclear, joint, extended and mixed families. A nuclear family is composed of such members as a married couple either widow, mother or widowed father and their unmarried children. The grown up sons usually establish their independent households soon after their marriage. Separate cooking marks the establishment of a new family. Married sons like to live separately by building their own houses and are eager to lead an independent life and shoulder the responsibility of earning their livelihood separately and maintaining their own families. Moreover the Pauri houses are not big enough to accommodate more than one couple. It is therefore necessary on the part of the married sons to live separately from their parents by establishing their own families wherever space permit in their parental village. Being a family head a person enhances his position in the society and enjoys several social advantages as the elders of the village do.

Joint family is an extended form of nuclear family which is composed of more than one nuclear family, the family heads belonging to same generation. After the death of the father the married sons with their children may continue to live jointly. Their unmarried brothers and sisters also stay with them. Thus a joint family comprises married brothers and their children and unmarried brothers and sisters, if any. In a joint family the eldest brother is considered to be the family head who assumes the roles and responsibilities of the father. All others are expected to obey him. His wife is also viewed to be the chief housewife who usually cooks for all and distributes food for all the family members. Such families are



extremely rare among the Pauri Shuinyas. After the death of the father the brothers may continue to live jointly for a few years, but very soon they feel the need for establishing their independent households. Frequent quarrels among the sisters-in-law, poverty and lack of accommodation in the parental house are among the most important reasons for the break-up of the joint family.

An extended family is a variant of joint family where the married sons and their spouses live jointly with their parents, the head of the family being the father and not the eldest brother. A single married son with his children living together with his parents may also constitute an extended family.

The types of families other than those described above are termed as mixed families. Such families are composed of widow and her unmarried children, orphans and such relations as father's sister, sister's children and widow sisters, etc.

The Pauri families are usually small in size, the smallest one having in the maximum three members. Large families having more than 10 members are occasionally met with. The house to house census taken in the two study villages, i.e., Jaidih and Tantara which comprise 53 families shows that 37 families (69.8 per cent) were of nuclear type, 6 families of joint type, 7 families of extended type and the remaining 3 families of mixed type. A Pauri family irrespective of type is characterized by a tie of belonging together economic co-operation, common religious functions and interpersonal intimate relationship. All the members of a family think themselves to be the branches of a common tree and the emotional attachment and sense of oneness bind them together. If one of the family members is beaten or offended the matter is taken into heart by other members and a joint effort is made to take revenge.

A Pauri family is an economic unit. Patches of forest land are allotted family-wise for shifting cultivation and the shares of meat procured by hunting or of sacrificial meat are distributed to individual families. Likewise, annual revenue, collection of grains for the

village fund and subscription for village rituals are paid on family basis. The male and female members have distinctive duties to perform and both men and women work hard in agricultural and other pursuits. But all the earnings of individual members go to the common economic pool of the family.

The Pauri family is also a ritual unit. The ancestral spirits of a family are propitiated by the parents and offerings of food are made to them for their blessing. Before a new fruit or crop is eaten this must be offered to the ancestral spirits at the family altar. The festival called *Akshaya Tirta* clearly signifies the emotional tie of the members of a family as distinguished from others. The sacred paddy seeds are sown in a separate patch of land and the produce is kept separately after harvest and consumed only by the members of the family and not by anyone else outside the family including the married daughters. This paddy is also not used for paying up the loan or for giving away as gift to anyone outside the family sphere. As mentioned already authority is vested in the father whom all others of the family are expected to obey. The women are never under subjugation in any family though they occupy a lower position than men in the Pauri society. The women are more hard working than the menfolk. They perform all the domestic duties and join the men in agricultural operations. In feasts and festivals and in marriage and birth ceremonies the women play greater role than men. Their position in the family sphere is pretty high and they are not under the male tutelage. A man hardly scolds his wife lest she might flee away to her parents. For this reason she is treated with affection and tenderness. Their only disability is the periodic pollution caused by their menstrual cycle that they suffer during which they are segregated and debarred from taking part in any ritual affair. Other points which contribute to their low position is the lack of their voice in any political matter and their ineligibility to inherit paternal property.

It is observed that the prescribed norms and behaviour of family members towards each other vary a great deal from the actual behaviour. According to the ideal pattern the children are expected

to obey their parents and persons of younger age group should treat those of older age group with deference. Brother to brother relationship should be hearty and congenial. In this context the interpersonal relationships between different members of a family may be described here.

The biological age cross-cuts the social age and the latter overrides the former. In some cases the persons of upper generation may be younger in age, but they are theoretically superior to those of lower generation who may be older in age. In actual practice this norm is hardly followed. Persons calling their father's younger brother and the elder brother (own or classificatory) by name and not by kinship terms. The authority of the father wanes with age and though he is considered to be the family head theoretically, in practice the eldest son exercises great control in the family. In old age the parents become completely dependent on their sons and have little or no voice in the family. In Jaldih, a man wanted his second son to marry the widow of his eldest son but the son refused to do so. Levirate marriage is in vogue among the Paulis. But in this case it did not materialise.

After separation the brothers seem to be pretty individualistic and they look after their own prosperity. The emotional tie which bound the brothers when they were in joint mess with their parents becomes very weak after separation. The data gathered from the Jaldih village show that in 3 out of 15 cases, the brothers lived in a joint family with their wives and children while in the other cases the brothers lived separately in their own respective nuclear families. In the case of the brothers' wives strangely some thing opposite takes place. While in joint mess they are envious of each other and quarrel among themselves frequently, but after separation their relationship with each other becomes cosy and congenial. Physiological and sociological kin relations seem to have no difference. For example the children of a man born by his levirate marriage and by any other type of marriage are not discriminated against one from another.

### Lineage :

The maximal descent group called *Khāl* is divided into a number of smaller social units called lineages. The broader group is called major lineage which further splits into a number of smaller segments called minor lineages. To put it otherwise, a group of families who can identify their consanguinal relationship with one another with a fairly accurate knowledge constitutes a minor lineage by means of their genealogy. There may be a number of minor lineages who are related to one another by consanguinity. They all believe to have descended from a common ancestor, but vaguely remember who that ancestor was. In such a case the cluster of related lineages constitutes a major lineage. In the case of *Khāl* which comprises a number of mythically related major lineage groups the idea of common ancestry is still more mythical and vague.

Jaldih comprises more than one *Khāl*. Some of them consist of major lineages and some others do not. Again some major lineage are split up into a number of minor lineages while some others are not. For example, *Sarkandi Khāl* consists of only one major lineage which is divided into two minor lineages. The *Kadaiudi*, *Bategain* and *Kasali Khāls* have more than one major lineage each but none of these units is further split up into the minor lineages. Hence these major lineages are for all socio-religious purposes treated as minor lineages. *Chedl*, *Derial* and *Kensidi Khāls* have each only one family, and therefore the differentiation of the lineages into major and minor units does not arise in these cases. Some of the salient features of lineage organization is described below :

- (i) When a death of some one in the lineage occurs and as soon as the lineage members, wherever they are, get the news, they throw away the earthen cooking vessels and remain polluted till the purificatory ceremony is held in the family of the deceased.
- (ii) In successful hunting, the hunter gets a special share of meat, a portion of which is distributed among the lineage members.

- (iv) On festive and ceremonial occasions shares of cooked rice, meat curry and cakes are distributed among the families of a lineage.
- (v) Lineage members help one another in economic pursuits and on marriage and festive occasions on the basis of reciprocity and mutuality of obligation.

### Khili :

*Khili* is composed of a number of lineages the members of which believe to have descended from a common ancestor, though such ancestry cannot be traced out genealogically. The members of a *Khili* consider themselves as brothers and sisters and therefore marriage within the *Khili* is incestuous. A *Khili* thus regulates marriage. The difference between *Khili* and clan is that the former is non-totemic and the latter totemic.

The Pauri Bhumias lack any clan organization. Originally a Pauri village was composed of a single *Khili* named after the village. Thus the Pauris of Patuli village belonged to *Patuli Khili* and those belonging to the village such as Kasira, Losi, Sarkonda, Ralsuan, Batgaon, Sarikala, Chaada, Kadakala and Raikala claimed to have belonged to Kasiri, Losal, Sarkondi, Ralsuin, Batgaon, Sarikuli, Chaadi, Kadakali and Raikuli *Khilis* respectively. It has been already mentioned earlier that when a village was uni-*Khili* it was exogamous. Among the Pauris the village exogamy is same as *Khili* exogamy. But certain *Khilis* among the Pauris are agnatic and these agnatic-*Khilis* are found in different villages. Since *Khili* is exogamous no marriage can take place among the members of the *Kutumba Khili* no matter whether they are found in one village or a multiple of villages. That means that marriage cannot take place between the people of those villages which are comprised of *Kutumba Khilis*.

In this case the village exogamy that means people of a group of villages which fall to the *Kutumba* category cannot marry among themselves. They can have marital relationship with

people of those villages which fall to the *Baydhu* category. The guiding principles in the matter of marriage is not only the *Khāl* but also the village. As the villages have been heterogeneous in *Khāl* composition. Now-a-days the *Khāl* has been the main guiding factor rather than the village in regulating marriage.

### Village :

Every village in the Pauri country has a definite location in space and a definite area and boundary in extent. The size of villages varies from one to the other depending upon the population and location. It is observed that the villages which are situated not far from the business and market centers, towns and roads are bigger than those which are situated in the interior areas.

A Pauri village is a closely knit social entity with a huge measure of cohesion and continuity. In a village the people are interrelated and share the sorrow and happiness of one another. It is a land owning unit so far as the sites which are suitable for clearings are concerned. These lands which are situated in hill-slopes are distributed by mutual consent in the village *Darbar*. The business of *Bringe* cultivation is closely connected with the village *Darbar*. As long as a person carries on cultivation in a plot of land he is not dispossessed by any means. But as soon as it lies fallow it comes back to the *Darbar* for redistribution among the villagers.

Recently private property in land situated in the plains has been introduced by the operation of land survey and settlement in the Pauri area. Record-of-right has been given to the persons in respect of the lands held by them in the plains. The homestead lands and kitchen garden and other types of lands around the village are recorded in the name of the individual owners. In spite of these changes the traditional collective outlook and cohesiveness continue as distinct land marks of the Pauri villages.

The social life of a Pauri is more a village affair than an individual concern. The rites and rituals connected with birth, marriage and death require the cooperation of all the villagers. If in a family children die one after the other in young age, the family head ceremonially handover his child to the villagers to avert further misfortune and ensure its health and happiness. The unmarried boys and girls are viewed as assets of the village rather than as exclusive possession of their respective parents. Marriage is the affair of the village. The bride wealth received for the village girls is enjoyed by all the families, and in the case of the marriage of the boys each family contributes grains and money as gifts. Starting from the selection of marriage mate till the final marriage rite, active co-operation of the villagers is needed at every step. *Darbar* house symbolizes the unity of the village. It functions as the club house of the village boys and the meeting place of the village elders. The ritual organization of the village shows elements of community feeling and sense of solidarity. Every Pauri village has *Gairi*, the tutelary deity installed close to the *Darbar* of the village. She is worshipped on many occasions for the wellbeing of the villagers. There is a common set of deities and each village has a set of religious functionaries of its own to propitiate these deities and perform the rituals. The *Dihuri* again comes into the picture in a very big way in the religious activities of the villagers. The day on which different rituals would be performed is decided by the elders at the village *Darbar*. The *Darbar* of the village inaugurates the jungle clearing by setting fire to the combustible matter with the sacred fire which is kept lighted in the *Darbar* throughout the year by the bachelors of the village.

Each Pauri village is also quasi-political unit. There is a secular head in every village and he is called *Nast* or *Padhan*. Minor quarrels and conflicts are decided in the village level. *Darbar* serves as the court where the village elders assemble morning and evening to dispose of cases and discuss important matters. Issues like changing village site, distribution of forest land, selection of days on which to perform rituals are discussed at the *Darbar*. The

role of the secular head of the village and the procedures followed for deciding quarrels and conflicts have been discussed in a separate chapter.

### Inter-village Relationship :

Though a Pauri village is an independent unit economically, socially, ritually and politically it is never an isolated entity. For various purposes interaction between villages becomes extremely essential and a village thus forms a segment of the wider inter-village organization called *Pinh* or *Bar* organization. The following occasions necessitate interaction between villages.

According to the rules of village exogamy a Pauri boy of a village seeks for his mate in another village. With the breakdown of the traditional structure of village, marriage within a village has become possible now, but the Pauris prefer to marry outside their village, and therefore matrimonial relations bring people of different villages in contact with each other. The dormitory organization facilitates interaction between villages when the boys and girls of one village visit other villages and spend some days there dancing and singing with their counterparts in their cognate villages. For agricultural purposes help from a neighbouring village may be sought for. If suitable forest clearings are exhausted in a village a few delegates from the village visit a neighbouring village and seek their permission to cultivate some patches of forest land of the latter. In such cases, after harvest the villagers visit the land owning village with gifts of a few measures of grains, some bottles of liquor and some amount of money as a token of respect. In scarcity of loans, grains for seeds may be brought from another village. In busy agricultural season a Pauri may need the help of a neighbouring village and hire its bachelors and spinners to work on his field. In such cases the labour force is not paid in terms of wage, but is entertained with delicious food. During some seasons the women of a village may visit another village with gift of cake and tobacco and on their return bring gift of turmeric, mohūa flower, maize and jackfruit.



For various reason some families may leave their parental village and settle down in another village with their cognatic kins. On special occasion such as death or divorce it becomes necessary for these families to visit their original village and seek help of their agnatic kins. Cases of pre-marital and extra-marital activities, and divorce involving more than one village are settled by the elders of the concerned and neighbouring villages.

Feasts and festivals like *Pih Jatai Puja* and *Thakurani Orha* observed in a few selected villages also bring the people of those villages together. The market centre acts as the meeting place of people of a number of villages. It is the place where the elders from different villages meet together, negotiate on marriage proposals and hear from each other about a variety of matter concerning their villages. Likewise bachelors and spinsters exchange presents, jokes and words of love when they meet at the market place.

#### **Pih or Bar organization :**

Superimposed on the village organization is the larger organization called *Bar* in Sundargarh and *Pih* in Keonjhar. For socio-political purposes the Pauri Bhuiya villages are grouped into number of *Bars*, each *Bar* consisting of a number of villages, the number varying from one *Bar* to the other. For example, the *Tinkhandia Bar* consists of three villages and the *Sackhandia Bar* seven villages. There are also still bigger *Bars* in the Pauri country. Delegates from different villages of a *Bar* assemble on an appointed day at a fixed place to take steps on matters concerning readmission into their society of a fellow tribal who was excommunicated for committing such offences as killing a cow or a woman; distribution of the property of a heirless Bhuiya; and incorporation of a non-tribal such as a Gaur in the Pauri community and the like.

A religious festival called *Pih Jatai Puja* is observed at the *Bar* or *Pih* level and this ritual reinforces and maintains solidarity and unity of the *Bar*.

Representatives from all the villages of a *Pih* meet together to participate in the ritual with contributions of a goat, some paddy grains, and a small amount of money. The *Pih Jatai Dihuri* officiates in the ritual and offers sacrifices to all the *Pat*, deities of the individual villages of the *Pih*. *Jau* cooked in a new earthen pot is also offered to the ancestral spirits. The *Pih Jatai* festival is performed to mark the observance of *Gamba* festival in individual villages. The religious rites and the political aspects of *Pih* or *Bar* are described in detail in sections dealing with religion and political organization of the *Bhuiyās*.

### Tribe :

The *Bhuiyās* as a tribe is the most prolific and numerous one widely distributed in different areas of the State of Orissa representing varying socio-cultural stages of development. Until recently there was no organization or forum which brought different sections of the tribe together for some common purpose. Only myths, oral traditions and common cultural heritage helped in binding different sections of the tribe together and bringing about awareness in them, an awareness that they were branched off from a common stock. In recent times the same myths, tradition, and culture are used for bringing about unity not at the regional, narrow, tribal level but at the national, wider, trans tribal level. The factor which fosters the wider tribal integration is not cultural; it is the concept of sub-nationalism which is largely responsible for bringing about unity of multiple tribal groups in a larger political arena. The objective of this inter tribal unity and integration is not to revive the tribal cultural heritage but to gain political privileges.

## CHAPTER VIII

### RELIGION

Religion forms one of the broad groupings of cultural aspects, the other broad groupings being technology and economics, social organization and education, political systems and mechanism of social control and folklore, drama, music and language. The aspect of arts may be included in the groupings of religion. Each of these cultural aspects satisfies specific wants and requirements of man. For example technology and economics fulfil the basic physiological wants of man. Social organization and education serve to perpetuate the group and its thought-ways and work-ways. Political structure safeguards the rights of the members of a society. As against these needs and requirements what the religion does is to adjust the man to his universe by providing security against forces more powerful than himself.

E. B. Tylor defined the religion as 'Belief in Spiritual Beings or 'Animism' which centres round the belief in soul, deities and subordinate spirits and practices of worship and propitiation of these Spiritual Beings. The important aspects which characterise religious phenomenon are animistic or animistic beliefs, concepts of spirits and ghosts, power concept, mana, magic, taboo, monotheism and polytheism. It is necessary to understand these concepts in the context of the culture of the society that is studied. Religion, as it is revealed from the studies of different cultures is a universal phenomenon and man had developed some religious beliefs and practices long before he devised means of producing food through agriculture and animal husbandry.

The least utilitarian aspect of culture such as the religious beliefs and practices developed so early in the experience of man. Why ? The man must have been filled with consternation and awe having his dream experiences and having been obsessed by the fear of supernatural powers and spiritual forces of the universe.

The man thought that the most austere and the most remote deities and spirits must have much in them that is human. He must have observed that the supernatural power which gave power to gods and ghosts and made it possible for inanimate objects to become entities motivated by good or ill will, was a humanly controllable essence.

The primeval man's approach to achieve this objective had been through supplication, propitiation, expiation and magical means. The description of the 'Religion,' among the Pauri Bhuiyyas which follows in this chapter includes the religious belief with particular reference to different supernatural powers and the particular manner in which they influence the life of the Pauris, the rituals by means of which these powers are enlisted in behalf of them and the religious and magical functionaries who mobilise efforts through their occult controlling techniques and prayers to achieve desired results.

### **Pauri Bhuiyya Pantheon :**

According to the Pauri Bhuiyyas the universe is believed to be dominated by a number of deities and spirits with varying range and intensity of their powers. According to their faith, a social hierarchy exists among the divine beings. The gods and spirits of the Pauris may be broadly classified as the supreme deities, general tribal gods, nature deities, village deities and family and ancestral spirits.

Like most other Munda group of tribes the Pauri Bhuiyyas esteem *Dharam Devta* (Sun God) and *Basukimata* (Earth Goddess) as their supreme deities. The Sun God shining high above the sky sustains life on the earth by giving light and the Mother Earth provides food for all. *Dharam Devta* and *Basukimata* or *Basumata* are described as husband and wife by most Pauris, but unlike the Earth Goddess the Sun God moves around the world regularly to

look after the living beings. These deities occupy the highest rank and there are no specific ceremony meant for worshipping them. But whenever liquor is taken a few drops are first poured on the ground with the prayer, "*Upere Dharam Devata Tale Basumata* (lit, the Sun God above and the Mother Earth below)" is a common incantation expressing reverence to the Supreme Deities. While taking an oath or a vow either the name of Sun God is uttered or a handful of earth is held. It is believed that nothing can be kept hidden from the Sun God who keeps a watch over the activities of the human beings and any lie or falsehood in his name is sure to bring ill luck to the offender. Likewise if a person tells a lie by holding a handful of earth serious calamity must befall him leading to death after which he gets mixed in the earth. *Dharam* and *Dharti* are always viewed as benevolent deities.

*Boram*, *Birde* and *Kanto Kuwari* are some of the general tribal deities worshipped by the Pauri Bhuiyyas. Of all, *Boram* is considered to be the most powerful. Some Pauris identify *Boram* with the Sun God, but others view it as a distinct entity. *Boram* is viewed to be a female deity and like Sun God she is benevolent in nature. She resides in the sacred grove situated at the outskirts of the village and is represented by stone emblem. In most of the major ceremonies she is propitiated, duly and fowls and goats are sacrificed and rice is offered to her. The festival called *Boram Puja* which is performed in the month of Chait is celebrated in honour of *Boram* to mark certain phases of agricultural operations such as forest clearing and setting fire to dried matter in the swiddens and sowing paddy and Guji. Besides, other important annual festivals like *Kach Jatra*, *Akshya Tritia*, *Bihira Puja* are performed near the sacred altar of the *Boram* called *Boram Math*.

*Birde* a male god of not very great significance and a few other minor gods are also worshipped along with *Boram* in major rituals. But *Kanto Kuwari* has attained the status of a national deity of Bona. She is of tribal origin and worshipped by all tribes and castes including the royal families of erstwhile Bona State.

She takes her form as a round piece of metal and appears once every year before her annual worship. It is said, that a cultivator found her out while ploughing his paddy and gave her to a Pauri priest of the village Jelo near the Khandadhar waterfall who started worshipping her. During the days of worship the deity is carried by the *Dihari* from village to village and to the palace of the ruling chief of Bonaigarh. During her visit she receives offerings and sacrifices from Pano to Kalyatriyas and from all the local tribal communities. After the festival is over the deity is kept hidden in a secret place in the jungle to be taken out for worship next year.

The spirits residing over the local hills, forests, streams and rivers are also propitiated by the Pauri Bhuinyas during village ceremonies. The term *Pat* usually refers to a block of hills, but in general the deities residing in the hills, forests and fields, streams and rivers are also called *Pats*. Thus we get *Koral Pat*, *Bhakpat* and *Kojas Pat* named after the neighbouring hills, *Kalapat* and *Rengapat* named after the forest and *Brahmani Pat*, the deity in charge of the river Brahmani. Each Pauri village has a set of *Pat* deities named after the local hills, forests, stream and rivers to whom the Pauris worship during all ceremonial occasions, and specifically on the last day of *Magh Purnā* to guard them against the wild animals and evil spirits dwelling in the hills and forests. A group of villages in a locality assemble at one place to worship their common *Pat* deities. During *Pinh Jatal* worship while the delegates from all the villages of Kaira Praganna assemble at Kaira they sacrifice fowls and goats, worship their territorial *Pat* deities such as *Mandal Pat*, *Pauri Pat* and *Kula Pat*.

*Galsi* and *Thakurani* are the two important village deities of the Pauri Bhuinyas. *Galsi* represented by a wooden pillar fixed on the ground near the *Darbar* is regarded as the tutelary deity of the village. She is benevolent and protects the villagers and their cattle and crops from diseases. When the village is shifted

to a new place the sacred pillar of the *Gaiki* is first installed at the new place and then construction of houses starts. In some Pauri villages stone slabs represent the goddess *Gaiki*. During each and every ritual *Gaiki* is worshipped without fail. In emergencies like sickness, epidemic and cattle disease the *Dihuri* burns incense, offers prayer and food and propitiates the *Gaiki* in great solemnity so that she wards off all troubles and difficulties. She is also worshipped to give the people a bumper crop. *Thakurani*, otherwise called *Margala* is worshipped in many Pauri villages. She is associated with *Gaiki* and is installed by her side, close to the *Darbar*. The terracotta image of *Thakurani* is supplied every year by the local potter, and worshipped in the month of *Margashir*. During the whole month sacrifices of goats and fowls are made to the deity in fulfilment of personal vows and the image is immersed in a stream at the end of the month. The ancestral spirits comprise the family deities and are offered consecrated food and incense on every ritual and festive occasions. The spirits of the unmarried persons and the children and those who died of cholera, small-pox, leprosy, snake-bite, tiger-kill and by committing suicide do not have any place in the spiritual world. They turn into ghosts and hover around the village. These ghosts are believed to cause illness and therefore, are appeased by offering tobacco, liquor and food. The ancestors of the village in general are worshipped by the village *Dihuri* during all collective worship where as those of the families are worshipped separately by individual family heads. The ancestral spirits are generally benevolent in nature and help the family members in every way and keep them and the cattle healthy. If they are offended and neglected they get angry and bring sickness and kill cattle. Therefore every family is very particular about the worship of the ancestral spirits.

In addition to their own indigenous gods, spirits and ghosts Pauri Bhuiyias have adopted many Hindu deities like *Shiva*, *Laxmi*, *Durga* and *Mahadev* and have started worshipping them.

## Religious Functionaries :

The sacerdotal-head of Pauri village is called *Dihuri* who officiates in all communal worships of the village and propitiates the deities on behalf of the villagers. He is said to belong to the senior most branch of the original village family and his post is hereditary. There is no bar for an unmarried or young man to hold the post of *Dihuri*. After the death of the *Dihuri* of Raikura, his son succeeded him at the age of nine. In case a *Dihuri* dies without leaving any son to succeed him the post goes to his brother. The insignia of the office of *Dihuri* is a basket (*Dala*) used for carrying consecrated materials which are offered to the deities during ceremonial occasions. This basket is considered most sacred and kept hanging in a carrying rope (*Sika*) from the roof of the inner house. None except the *Dihuri* may touch it lest the basket is defiled and replaced by a new one forthwith. At the time of succession to the post of *Dihuri* the village elders, on an appointed day, assemble in the *Darbar* with a collection of about a handful of paddy from each family. They put all the paddy in a new basket with some incense and hand it over to the new *Dihuri* with the following announcement "Oh, *Dharam Devta, Basukimata, Gabiri, Boram, Pitropita* from to-day we get our new *Dihuri*. Let every thing go well with him and with the villagers. Let all the deities receive gifts from his hand manily". The paddy which the *Dihuri* receives from the villagers is husked by him and offered to all the deities. Some of the husked rice is kept separately with the *Dihuri* and cooked by him inside the *Bhitar* of his house and offered to the ancestral spirits of his family.

In case crops fail every year, people fall ill constantly and die in spite of treatment and serious calamities overwhelm the village, people feel in such situations the need for replacing the existing *Dihuri* by some one selected from the *Khali* which settled first in the village. The following test is applied while selecting a new *Dihuri*.

A village elder plasters a patch of land at the *Darbar* with cowdung and water after taking bath. He husks some paddy and collects the rice grains. Praying *Dharam Devta, Basumata* and



*Galshi* he draws a circle of turmeric powder on the plastered spot and places three piles of husked rice. The first pile is called '*Dharam Punji*'—(i.e. the pile in honour of *Dharam Devta*) the second the *Dihuri Punji* (the pile representing the proposed sow *Dihuri*) and the third the *Parja Punji* (the pile representing the common villagers). The piles are then carefully covered with an earthen vessel and cowdung and mud are plastered around its rim so that ants and other insects cannot enter and disturb the position of the piles. The piles are kept covered overnight and are opened next morning. If the piles are found intact and undisturbed the proposed person is selected as *Dihuri*, otherwise, similar test is applied for others till a suitable man is found out by the process of such divination.

The *Dihuri* being the sacerdotal head of the village works as a priest on behalf of the villagers to propitiate the deities for the general wellbeing. He starts first various phases of agricultural operation like felling trees in *Swings* setting fire, ploughing, and sowing and then other follow suit. By doing so it is believed to result in bumper harvest and the village *Padhan* enforces it. By virtue of his ritual status in the village the *Dihuri* enjoys certain privileges. He gets the head of all the animals sacrificed to the deities on ritual occasions. During communal hunt a day is devoted exclusively for him as is done for the village *Padhan* and is entitled to a special share from the hunt. In all rituals each family contributes a handful of paddy to be husked by the *Dihuri* and the rice grains are used as offerings to the deities. After the ritual is over these grains are cooked and eaten by the *Dihuri*. In some villages situated in the plains one or two plots of paddy land are given to the *Dihuri* to grow crops and meet out of the produce, the ritual expenses. In good old days all people used to work free for a day in the field of the village *Dihuri*, but this practice is no longer in vogue.

An unmarried boy (*Bhendia*) acts as a priest in a ritual called *Jangal Puja* (i.e. ritual for forest) or *Dhuria Puja*. This ritual is performed on the last day of *Magh Padya* a festival in which a *Bhendia* offers cakes on *Saf* leaves to the deceased unmarried

boys and girls. Likewise, on certain ceremonies like *Dhor Jatra* and those associated with life cycle and crisis of life the wife of the *Dihuri* and the married women *Mahataris* play the role of priests.

At the family level each family head plays the role of a priest while performing family rituals. After the communal worship is done by the *Dihuri* at the village level, the family-heads perform the same in their own houses and propitiate the family ancestors by offering them cooked rice and other eatables. Ceremonies connected with birth, marriage, and death are all performed in individual houses in which the married women and or the family-heads perform the rites.

The inner tabernacle where the ancestral spirits reside, *Boram Mam* or the sacred grove where the deities like *Boram* and *Gaisiri*, inhabit and the shrine of the village *Thakurani* are considered sacred by the Pauris. Women during their menses are not allowed to step into these places lest this might drive away the deities resulting in unforeseen calamities and disaster.

### Ceremonial cycle

As indicated above, the Pauri Bhuiyans like most other tribes observe a series of feasts and festivals. Besides their religious significance most of the festivals are closely associated with the agricultural cycle and are performed to mark different phases of economic activities. Agricultural operations like distribution of forest land for shifting cultivation, felling trees, ploughing, weeding, debushing, harvesting, and eating new crops are all solemnized by performing appropriate rituals and worshipping concerned deities and ancestral spirits. Besides their economic significance festive occasions provide scope for interaction and get-together of kith and kin. Of all, the most important purpose of the feasts and festivals is to break the monotony and boredom of daily routine duties and to provide relaxation and leeway for enjoying life. The religious occasions come off and on in both slack and busy periods in the life of the Pauris. Some relaxation and digression from routine activities help one, to feel enervating and work with a new zeal.

*Magh Padoi* or *Magh Parab* held in the month of *Magh* marks the beginning of the agricultural cycle of the year following which are performed such festivals as *Am Nus*, *Kath Jatra*, *Akhani*, *Giler Jatra*, *Sorem Danta* and *Tanta*. The following table gives a list of the annual festivals of the Paori Bhumias.

TABLE No. 8

*Table showing the Annual Festive Cycle of the Paori Bhumias*

Sl. No. (1)	Name of the Festival (2)	Month when performed (3)	Purpose (4)	Remarks (5)
1	<i>Magh Padoi</i>	January-February	To mark the allotment of <i>Bingra</i> land, felling trees in <i>Bingra</i> , collecting thatching grass.	A traditional Paori festival observed for three days.
2	<i>Am Nus</i>	February-March	To mark the new mango-eating.	A traditional Paori festival.
3	<i>Kath Jatra</i>	Ditto	To mark the firing of <i>Bingra</i> fields.	Ditto
4	<i>Giler Jatra</i>	March	To mark the first eating of <i>Giler</i> grass.	Performed by the women.
5	<i>Akhani</i>	March-April	To inaugurate the communal sun-bathing.	Observed for three days

6	Bogam-Odevta	March-April	..	To worship the paddy for first sowing.	—
7	Tirtia	May	..	Observed to mark the first sowing of paddy the non-tribals and Gajls.	Observed mostly by the non-tribals.
8	Bihisa Puja or Asad.	August	..	To mark transplanting and cross-cultivation paddy and sowing of jow and kolath. Also observed to ensure good rainfall.	Associated with both low-land and shift-ting cultivation.
9	Pith Jatal Puja	Ditto	..	Performed by a group of villages to mark the new eating of maize.	
10	Gamha	.. August-September	..	Observed for cattle worship and for ceremonial borrowing of grains.	
11	Nua Khia	.. September-October		To inaugurate weeping and eating of new rice.	
12	Kanema	.. November-December		Performed after the harvest and before the threshing of low land paddy to ensure bumper harvest.	
13	Makar Jatta	December-January	..	Festival for worshipping Lord Shiva.	An Orhya festival

All the rituals of the Pauri Bhuiyyas exhibit a common trend. The procedures followed, equipments used and personnel involved in the rituals lack any variation and are extremely stereotyped. The materials used in the rituals include turmeric powder, vermilion husked Arua rice, incense, wicks, milk, molasses and leaf-cups and the animals needed for sacrificial purpose are goat, sheep and fowl. Axe is the only tool used for slaughtering the animals. The procedures followed for performing the rites vary from ritual to ritual depending upon the simplicity or complexity of the rituals. But the common trend in all cases is more or less standardized. The universalities of the rites are clearing the place of worship, horizontal and vertical lines, cross-cutting each other with turmeric powder putting vermilion dots inside, burning incense and lighting the wicks, washing the husked-rice and offering piles of rice in honour of individual deities, pouring milk and molasses water on the piles formally offering the sacrificial animal by lifting it in hands making it to eat a few grains from the rice piles, pulling some hairs or feathers from its head, slaughtering it by an axe, placing the head of the rice-pile and pouring the blood over it. The final step of the rituals is to bow down and pray for health and happiness, plenty and prosperity. Since all the rituals are standardized it may not be useful to describe all the rites of different rituals in detail. However, a short description of the festivals observed by the Pauris is necessary to throw light on their belief system and the aims and objectives of each festival.

### **Magh Podoi :**

*Magh Podoi* is observed in the months of January-February for three days. After the year's harvest is over a day is selected in meeting of the elders at *Darbar* and all the villagers are informed at least four to five days in advance so that each family keeps every thing ready to perform the ritual. Advance intimation helps every family to prepare required quantity of *Kusana* (rice beer) and arrange required quantity of rice and other requirements. One day prior to the ceremony the unmarried boys collect a leaf-cup full of paddy and *Katala* from every family and take those to the *Dihur's* house.

The *Dihuri* who has observed fasting and has already taken his bath receives the paddy and *Katale* and husks them separately. The first day of the festival is called *Khiri Katale* (lit. offering of porridge prepared out of *Katale*). When the *Dihuri* worships the *Gaiki* and offers shares of husked rice and molasses water to all the deities. He also cooks some rice and prepares gruel from *Katale* and offers them to all the deities and ancestral spirits.

The second day of the festival is called *Pode* (lit. burning). A patch on the ground near the *Gaiki* is cleaned and a small hut is constructed with four pieces of freshly cut logs of wood. This miniature hut is thatched with wild grass. The *Dihuri* propitiates all the deities and kindles a new fire by friction of two pieces of sticks. He lights the ghee-soaked wicks in this new fire and sets the newly constructed hut on fire. A chicken duly worshiped is thrown in to this fire. On this day every family of the village puts out fire altogether from the family hearth and takes a little bit of the sacred fire from the place of worship to kindle a new fire in the hearth of its kitchen. No outsider is allowed to take this sacred fire. When the hut is on fire the *Dihuri* and all present there shout "Heribol" and pray to all the deities. All the feasts and festivals of the year is over and here comes the new year with the cycle of ceremonies. Let every thing be auspicious for the new year. After the fire is extinguished the villagers carry the *Dihuri* on their back and proceed to his house and all others follow them. *Dihuri's* wife pours a little water with turmeric powder on every body's feet and all are given cakes to eat. As the ashes of the new fire is supposed to carry good-luck all put a mark of it on their fore head and carry the new fire to their houses. Gruel is prepared out of paddy and *Katale* in this new fire and is offered to the ancestral spirits.

On the last day of the festival called "*Pitha Khani*" (lit. eating of cakes) the *Dihuri* goes to the place where the newly constructed hut was burnt. He worships the deities by offering rice grains and then sows a handful of paddy on the ashes. The place is ploughed with a ploughshare. The family heads prepare cakes and offer cakes and *Kazane* (rice-bear) to their family spirits in the sacred *Bhitar*. With this the ceremony comes to an end.

*Magh Padoi* marks the termination of the new agricultural year. It is observed to bid farewell to the last year and to pray the deities for a beautiful and prosperous new year. The burning of the hut the sowing of the paddy in the ashos and the ploughing of the place of worship signify that such activities as cutting trees, setting fire to bushes and trees and all other activities connected with forest clearing and ploughing sowing and all other agricultural operations are now open to be taken up by any one of the village according to his convenience. Similarly, the Pauris are now free to collect broom-stick and thatching-grass from the jungle, split raw *Biri* and eat *Katala*, without offending any deity and without any detriment to their health and happiness.

#### Am Nua :

Am Nua is observed in the months of January-February when the mango trees are in blossom. A day for the ritual is fixed and the same is communicated to all. On the appointed day the *Dihuri*, after taking a bath, husks paddy collected from individual houses and proceeds to the *Boromani* with other offering materials. Some others of the village who must have observed continence on the previous night and whose wives are not in menstrual period and the boys for whom no negotiation for marriage is yet been made may accompany the *Dihuri* to the *Boromani*. The *Dihuri* worships all the deities and offers husked rice, molasses and milk. Either a male goat or a pair of chicken (one hen and one cock) are sacrificed on every alternate year to appease the deities. The *Dihuri* then cooks some husked rice mixed with mango blossoms and offers the gruel to all the deities. The villagers present at the spot carry with them rice cooked in their houses in new pots. After the rites are observed the meat is cooked on the spot and all enjoy a hearty meal there and return home. Any surplus food is never brought home. Until this ceremony is performed no Pauri may eat raw mango or manure his fields. If he breaks the taboo, calamities are likely to befall him and his co-villagers.

### Kath Jatra :

The burning of dried trees and bushes in the forest clearings may only be started after the *Kath Jatra* ceremony is held in the months of January-February. Like many other festivals this ceremony is not celebrated on any definite calendar day of the year. A day is fixed by the villagers for holding the ritual. The *Dihuri* installs two pieces of *Sa' logs*, one dry and the other green, at the *Darbar*. He plasters a patch on the ground and offers husked-rice, molasses, and milk (*Pal Sital*) to the *Gauri*. He then goes to the *Boram Merk* and after performing necessary rites sacrifices a fowl. The rice grains and the meat are cooked and eaten there. Unless this ceremony is performed the *Bhuiyas* do not eat fried *Mohua* flowers which are eaten before hand only by boiling.

### Glor Jatra :

*Glor Jatra* follows *Kath Jatra* in the month of March to mark the eating of *Glor* flowers, which are collected in plenty from the jungle to serve as one of their supplementary diet. As collection of *Glor* blossoms are done mostly by women this is the only ritual for which they fix a day and make necessary arrangements to perform it. The *Mahataris* (married women) who are neither pregnant nor during menses collect a handful of paddy from every household and give it to the *Dihuri's* wife. The latter husks it and with other materials such as incense, milk, molasses, proceeds to the forest. Other women of the village accompany her. Reaching there the *Dihuri's* wife worships a *Glor* plant with offerings of milk and molasses and all return to the village with a *Glor* branch. The branch is stuck on the ground at the *Darbar* which was previously cleaned and marked with some paintings. Here the *Glor* branch is worshipped with offerings of milk, molasses, and *Mohua* flowers. Seven women carry the plant to the stream for immersion after which all the women enjoy rice and dal cooked near the stream. It is only after this ceremony that the *Pauris* may collect and eat *Glor* blossoms.

### Akhani :

*Akhani*, otherwise called *Akhan Paridiv* is celebrated to mark the beginning of the communal hunting. This had been described in detail in chapter Four.



### Borāṃ Devtā :

A day in the months of March-April is fixed for worshipping *Borāṃ Devtā*. One day prior to the ceremony (*Sar Pua*) the *Dihuri* keeps fasting and does not smoke until he husked paddy collected from all the families to be used in the ritual. After doing so he eats once only in the late after-noon and observes continence. At night every family takes a gourd-ful of paddy to the *Dihuri*'s house and leaves it there overnight. Next morning the *Dihuri* slaughters a chicken at his door step and sprinkles the blood on all the gourds containing paddy. Women with veils on their face come and take home their respective gourds. It is believed that this paddy carries good luck (*Sūbha*) and is stored for the first sowing on the *Akshaya Tīra*. The *Dihuri* then, proceeds to *Borāṃ Merh* with a group of villagers and propitiates *Borāṃ* by offering rice-grains, milk, molasses, and by sacrificing fowls and/or goats. The meat and rice are cooked and eaten there and are never brought home. It is only after the *Borāṃ Devtā* is observed that the *Pauria* can take up works like setting fire to their *Bhinga* and sowing upland paddy and *Gujā*.

### Tirtia or Akshaya Tirtia :

*Tirtia* ceremony is observed on the third day of the moon in the month of *Sabath* by individual family heads to initiate the first sowing of paddy. One day preceding the ceremony the man keeps fasting and after taking bath he husks some paddy. After arranging husked-rice, turmeric powder, vermilion and other offerings he eats only one meal at late hours of the day. That night he observes fasting and continence. Early next morning he takes a bath and proceeds to his *Sakadi* or paddy field with the consecrated materials. Facing to the East, he cleans a patch of land and worships *Gramaki*, *Dharm Devtā*, *Basmata* and *Borāṃ* by offering rice, milk and molasses. He then sacrifices a fowl in honour of the deities and sprinkles drops of blood on the piles of offered rice grains. After propitiating the deities and praying for good harvest he digs up some soil with a plough-share and touching the paddy on his forehead sows two handful of paddy. Some of this paddy are

sown in a separate plot, the produce of which is consumed by the family members and are neither sold nor given to others. On return from the field some gruel is cooked in a new-earthen pot and offered to the family spirits in every house.

The Pauris observe a series of taboos on *Tirta* ceremony. Any man whose wife is pregnant or is during her menses may not perform ceremony. He should observe continence preceding night and should not touch a menstruating woman on the ceremonial day. On the day of the ceremony he should not brush his teeth, smoke or eat any food and talk to any body until the ritual is over and neither he nor any of his family members should go to any body's house until the family head has performed the ritual and taken his food. An outsider is not allowed to witness the ritual, and the family members do not give any thing to any body outside the family until the ritual is over. The produce from the land in which the *Tirta Mochi* (sanctified seeds) is sown is kept separately for family consumption. As this harvest is believed to carry good-luck, this may not be sold or given away to others.

#### **Asadi or Bihira Puja :**

*Asadi* observed in the month of August is intended to ensure good rainfall. The *Dihuri* worships the village deity, *Gairi* and sacrifices a goat or fowl alternately every year. It is after *Asadi* that the Pauris may undertake such agricultural operations as cross-cultivation, transplantation and weeding of low land paddy, sowing of *Bihand Kolach* and ploughing of *Gude* land for the second time.

#### **Pirh Jatal Puja :**

This is the only ritual observed communally by a group of villages. Delegates from all the villages of the area participate in the ritual which is observed in the month of August. The Pauris of Kolra area celebrate it in Kolra village and a *Dihuri* called *Pirh Jatal Dihuri* performs the religious rites. He selects a day for holding the ritual and sends message to the respective villages

through an office bearer -called *Gadhai*. The *Pauris* of the participant villages raise subscription and purchase a male goat for the ritual. Those who intend to go to attend the ceremony collect rice and curry with them for their own food. On the appointed day delegates from the concerned villages assemble at the place of worship with their goats. The *Pih Jatai Dihuri* worships the tutelary deity of the area and other important local hill deities (*Pat*) and offer sacrifices. Rice and meat are cooked on the spot and the participants enjoy a feast. It is only after this festival that the *Pauris* can observe *Gamha* in individual villages and eat maize.

### **Gamha :**

Soon after the *Pih Jatai Puja* is over the *Pauris* observe *Gamha* in their respective villages on the full-moon day in the month of *Srabon* (July-August). A few days prior to the festival, the *Nak* (secular-headman of the village) brings some paddy on a loan on behalf of the village to be paid back after harvest. This paddy is shared by all the families of the village. On the festive day the *Pauris* offer gruel, rice cakes, and meat curry to the ancestral spirits in their respective houses. In the morning the cattle are given salt to eat and their hoofs are washed, horns anointed with oils, and forehead besmeared with turmeric paste. They are given full rest for the day. At night *Pauri* women greet them with lighted wicks and offer fried-paddy (*Kha*) and cakes to eat.

### **Nua Khia :**

*Nua Khia* or new-rice eating ceremony is observed in the months of September-October to make the eating and reaping of new rice innocuous. On the festive day the *Dihuri* cut a few sheaves of up-land paddy from the *Guda* of the villagers after making libations (*Pat Sital*) of milk, molasses and rice grains to *Gaski* and *Boram*. Following the *Dihuri* other villagers go to their respective fields and after praying *Dhampa Devata* cut a few sheaves of *Guda* paddy. These are kept hanging on the roof in

a bunch. Subsequently they reap *Guda* paddy and after the harvest give some of this paddy to the *Dihuri*. On same day the *Dihuri* husks the paddy, prepares a gruel and offers it to *Gaisiri*, *Boram* and the ancestral spirits along with sacrifices of fowls. *Jau* is also prepared in individual houses and offered to the family ancestors. It is only after this ceremony that the *Paurs* may eat newly harvested *Guda* rice.

### Karama :

*Karama* festival is observed preferably after the paddy is harvested in the months of November-December. Four or five days earlier the *Paurs* make necessary arrangements for the ritual. On the appointed day the *Dihuri* and the girls of the village fast for the whole day. In the morning the *Dihuri* takes bath and goes to the jungle with flowers and a pot of water in search of the *Karama* (*Naucllea parvifolia*) plant. When a suitable plant is traced out, he greets the plant with flowers and returns to the village. In the evening he goes to bring a branch of the plant to the village. The unmarried boys accompany him with drums. The *Dihuri* makes libations to the sacred plant by offering rice-grains, molasses, and milk and cuts the branch. Seven boys carry the branch and on reaching the village the women wash the feet of the *Dihuri* with turmeric water. The floor of the *Darbar* is now plastered and a mud altar with a canopy of twigs and branches is prepared. The *Dihuri* plants the *Karama* branch on the altar, and worships it by offering rice-grains, molasses, milk and sweets to the branch. The girls provide fried *Gangei* to the *Dihuri* to offer to *Karama Devta*. A man who knows the legend of *Karama Raja* narrates it. The girls spend the night by lighting lamps near the sacred plant and the men engage themselves in dancing.

Next morning, the *Dihuri* worships the sacred plant and sacrifices chicken contributed by the girls. In every seventh year of the worship a girl is obliged to contribute a chicken for sacrifice in honour of *Karama Devta*. After the plant is worshipped the *Dihuri* uproots it and hands it over to the boys. Seven boys carry it to every house of the village where they are greeted by

the women and with offerings of rice cakes. Finally the branch is thrown in a stream or river. The festival is enjoyed with feasting and great rejoicing and during this festival many guests and relatives visit the Pauri families.

#### **Makar Jatra :**

*Makar Jatra* is not a traditional festival of Pauri Bhuiyyas and is observed only in the Koira village where the Pauris from some of the neighbouring villages assemble to celebrate the festival. On the full-moon day in the month of Paus (December-January) the Bhuiyya *Diburi* of Koira village worships a sacred piece of stone called *Nageswar Mahadev* installed in an open place at the outskirts of the village. Persons belonging to other castes and tribes also participate in the worship and present offerings of coconut, ripe bananae, fried-paddy and sweets to the deity.

The above account of the feast and festivals of the Pauri Bhuiyyas shows that the Pauris worship their deities more with a view to gain economic and other benefits than merely for religious and devotional purposes. Almost all rituals and festivals which are observed by the Pauris are closely associated with agricultural activities and the deities are propitiated to guard their crops, ensure good rainfall and help in getting a bumper crop, and to keep the Pauris free from disease and disaster. All the important agricultural operation like distribution of forest land for *Binga* cultivation, felling trees and firing dried trees, ploughing, sowing, transplanting, weeding, reaping and harvesting, and cutting of new crops are marked by religious observances unless the *Diburi* starts them first no other persons of the village dare to do so for fear of divine punishment.

The religious practices of the Pauri Bhuiyyas are based on community feeling and co-operation. Most of the ceremonies are observed at the village level in which the village priest worships the deities on behalf of all the villagers and prays to the deities for the wellbeing of the village and all people on the universe at large. Every household contributes offering materials and objects

of sacrifice and the village *Diburi* makes sacrifices and offers consecrated materials to the god and spirits and propitiates them for the wellbeing of the community.

Traces of borrowing from the Hindu Pantheon and the religious ceremonies are noticed even among the remote Pauri Bhuinys who lay greatly insulated from the outer world due to lack of suitable communication and due to geographical and cultural barriers. The gods and goddesses like *Shiva* or *Maha sh. Durga*, *Laxmi*, and *Jagannath* are revered by many Pauris, and in *Makar Jatra*, a Bhuinya *Diburi* worships at the shrine which is dedicated to *Mahadeb* called *Nageswar*, one of the Holy Trinity of the Hindu Religion. The festivals like *Makar Jatra* and *Ganika* lack any feature of the tribal religion and are clear case of cultural borrowing. It is interesting to note that the borrowing of religious traits has been a two-way traffic. The Pauris have borrowed some religious trait from the neighbouring non-tribal communities and vice versa. For example, groups of men and women belonging to different castes and tribes assemble at *Koira* to celebrate the *Makar Jatra*. *Kanto Kuanri* is supposed to be a Bhuinya deity, when it is carried by a Bhuinya *Diburi* from village to village the deity is offered sacrifices by all irrespective of castes and tribes. One and all starting from the low to high caste *Kshatriyas* and *Brahmins* participate in the worship of the deity along with the Bhuinys and other tribal communities like *Kondh* and *Gond* who live in the area. The tribal deity called *Pauri Devi* is often identified as *Durga* worshipped by caste Hindus in the low-country villages. The process of trans-acculturation in religious life as a general phenomenon is very much evident in the Bhuinya area.

Unlike many tribal communities such as *Saora*, *Kondh*, *Santal*, *Oron* and *Munda*, the Pauri Bhuinys have not embraced Christianity. Their strong religious sentiments and a sense of higher social status have kept them free from all allurements of the Christian missionaries in spite of their poverty and indigence.

## CHAPTER IX

### LEADERSHIP PATTERN

The Pauri Bhuiyās like the Juang are a peace loving people and therefore do not like to interfere with or intrude upon the affairs of others. Even if they are displeased with somebody they try to suppress their feelings and do not give vent to their emotional outburst. Inhabiting inhospitable terrain they want to lead a smooth life free from animosity and bitterness with their fellowmen. Intra and inter-village quarrels are rarely met with. However, the human nature in general as it is the Pauri Bhuiyās are not completely free from jealousy, covetousness and wantonness which create occasions for quarrels and conflicts, but these are never so serious as to threaten the community life. Conflicting situations in the village are decided at the village level by a council of elders under the leadership of the *Nak* while inter-village quarrels and conflicts which cannot be decided at the village level are decided either by the elders of the concerned villages or are referred to the wider territorial organization. The political organization in practice moulds and modifies the behavioural pattern of the Pauri Bhuiyās in conformity to the traditional norm of the society. In this context the role which the village traditional elites such as the *Nak*, and *Dihur* play is very significant. These elites not only occupy higher social status in the society by virtue of their authority, but are also guardian of traditional values and social control.

Such leaders of the Pauri society may be classified as traditional and new or emerging leaders. The post of the traditional leaders is hereditary where as that of the new leader is held on tenure basis for a limited number of years. One of the new leaders is the member of Gram Panchayat who represents the village in the statutory panchayat. The panchayat member is invariably selected by unanimity not by majority vote. Pauri village in general works harmoniously and there is very little intra village conflict. It is almost free from any disruptive influences

of party politics and majority votes. Every one participates in decision-making and decisions are reached inevitably by conscience and not by majority vote. A short account of different leaders of a Pauri village is given below.

#### Village Leaders :

##### **Naek**

The secular-head of each Pauri viage is called *Naek* or *Gawtia* in the Bhuniya area of Sundergarh district and *Padhan* in the corresponding Bhuniya pirs of Keonjhar district. This office was created by the ruling chiefs for administrative purposes. The *Naek* used to collect annual revenue from the village, decide quarrels and conflicts, attend to officers during their visit to the Pauri villages. After the merger of the states, the *Naek* continued to collect the revenue which was levied on village basis and not on individual basis. The *Naek* decided the amount to be paid by individual families according to their economic standard.

The post of the *Naek* is hereditary. Since the Pauri society is patriarchal the office of the *Naek* descends from father to the eldest son. A turban is the insignia of the office of the *Naek* and when a new *Naek* assumes his office, the villagers tie a turban on his head, bow down with folded hands and pray "You have become our new *Naek* from to-day. Let you be in best of health and let you look after your *Paraja* (lit, the villagers)".

Being the secular-head the *Naek* plays a very important role in judicial affairs of the village. He presides over the village meeting and decides cases relating to interpersonal quarrels, breach of social customs, partition of property among co-sharers, and marriage proposals. In all such case he discusses the issue with the assembled elders of the villages and takes their co-nensus and arbitrates the matter on the basis of the collective opinion of the villagers. He serves as the chief spokesman while negotiating with the *Bandhas* regarding any marriage proposal and handover the bride price on behalf of the groom's parents to the bride's



parents. Distribution of fresh *Bingra* lands among the families is done by the *Dihuri* and the *Nask*. The first day of the annual ceremonial hunting expedition is observed in honour of the *Nask* who performs a ceremony to appease the deities for successful hunt and if any animal is killed the *Nask* gets the hind legs as a token of respect. In short the *Nask* works as the conscience keeper of the villagers and all the villagers are expected to respect him and obey his orders.

As the village-headman the *Nask* enjoys some other privileges. For example all able bodied adult persons of the village at the rate of one from each family work one day free on his field. In Cock-tail parties the *Nask* is served more quantity of liquor than the commoners and he is served first than the others of the party. For his work as the revenue collector, the *Nask* gets remuneration of two *Pais* of husked-rice and some cash called *Bheda Paisa* at the rate of one anna per rupee of revenue collected. In *Gamha* festival it is customary for the *Nask* to incur a loan of grains on behalf of all the families and it is he who also clears the loan in time.

#### **Dihuri :**

While the *Nask* in the capacity of secular-head works as the intermediary between the villagers and the governmental authorities and external agencies, the *Dihuri* as the sacerdotal head acts as a link between the supernatural powers and the living beings. Being the religious head and having hailed from the senior most branch of the village the *Dihuri* is respected by every one of the village and enjoys certain privileges which are limited to contribution of free labour for a day by the villagers, and extra share of sacrificial meat including heads of the animals sacrificed in rituals. The village *Dihuri* is strictly viewed as religious head while the *Nask* as the kingpin and the formal leader of the village.

#### **Member :**

The post of Member or Ward Member is a new office created after introduction of statutory panchayat in the tribal areas. Functionally the posts of the *Nask* and the Member are comple-

mentary to one another. The main differences between them are that the former is the traditional leader who is the guardian of social control, values, and code of conduct and the latter is an emerging new leader who is largely concerned with the economic development and welfare of the village. The *Nask* is the spokesman of his villagers while the Member is the liaison between the villagers and the Grama Panchayat at the lower level and the Government officers at the higher level. In education, wealth and general outlook the *Nask* is almost same as commoners of his village. But the Member must be more articulate and active and have more contact with outsiders than others of his village in order to be effective in his works.

### Village Elders (Bhal Bhai) :

Apart from the *Nask*, Member and *Diburi* who constitute the formal leadership of the village, the village elders play no less important role in the socio-political area of the village. The village elders take part actively in all discussions which are held at the *Darbar* of the village and their opinion is duly taken into consideration before any decision is taken finally. Any difference of opinion is sorted out and discussions are held threadbare until unanimity is reached. In a Pauri village an individual is regarded as an integral part of the organic whole and in such a social structure unanimity rather than majority vote is followed as the guiding principle in decision-making process.

### Village Council :

The village council is composed of the formal leaders such as the *Nask*, *Diburi*, and the Member and a group of elderly men of the village. The deliberations of the council are made at the *Darbar* or in the dormitory house either early morning before the villagers leave for their fields and forests or in the evening when all return home after the day's toil. Every day the elderly men assemble twice in the *Darbar* in the morning and evening in an informal meeting to discuss about the current affairs of their daily life and other topics of interest. But when summoned for arbitration of any important case the council of village leaders and elders

constitute the jury and the *Darbar* serves as an open-air court-house. The Pauri Shuinyas have a set of formal leaders, but as a democratic people the real authority is vested not with the defacto leaders but with the council of elders. All present in the *Darbar* take part in the arbitration and the decision is accepted with unanimous approval of the jury. The Nask's duty at the close of the arbitration is only to declare the verdict of the council.

The topics which come up to the village council for decision include such matters as quarrel between co-villagers, partition of property among brothers, breach of taboos, negligence of duties of *Dhangdas* and *Dhang* is adultery, extra marital and socially forbidden sexual relationship, etc. The concerned parties are summoned to the *Darbar*, and the party which is found guilty is fined a few measures of husked-rice, a goat or fowl, a few bottles of liquor and some cash. In the case of adultery, the woman may be handed over to the adulter as his co-wife. In the case of love between *Bandhu* partners the girl is given in marriage to the boy with whom she has intrigue. If any body tries to conceal his faults, it becomes necessary to detect the actual offender by oaths and ordeals. The suspected persons are asked to tell the truth by touching some earth or a piece of tiger skin. It is believed that any body telling lie by touching earth or tiger skin soon meets death and becomes a part of the earth or is killed by tiger. In serious cases the alleged person is asked to face ordeals like picking up a coin from a pot-ful of boiling water or holding a piece of hot iron. The fine collected from the offenders is spent in holding a feast and the liquor is sprinkled ceremonially to mitigate the conflict. The cases of land dispute between two villages, incestuous love affairs, pre-marital pregnancy, witchcraft of serious nature, homicide, divorce and separation which cannot be decided at the village level are referred to the council of wider territorial organization.

#### Inter-village Council :

As has been pointed out previously, such matters as disputes over boundary between two villages and cases of divorce, which cannot be decided by one party and are not important enough

to be brought to the notice of the *Pih* council (council of wider territorial organization) are decided mutually by the elders of concerned villages. To settle any dispute regarding village boundary, elders of the neighbouring villages are invited and the matter is decided by divination which is described in chapter Four. In the case of divorce, a delegate of village elders proceed to the girl's village and discussion is held at the *Darbar*. If the woman is proved to be at fault the groom's party may claim compensation for the bride-wealth they paid to the girl's parents. On the other hand, if the man is found guilty the woman's parents may claim a few measures of husked-rice and some amount in cash towards the maintenance of the woman during her stay with them after separation. The formal divorce is declared jointly by both the parties after ceremonial drinking of liquor and thereafter the woman is free to marry again. But so long as the divorce is not formalized and rites connected with it not observed her husband continues to retain all the jural claims over her and may perform necessary funeral rites in case she dies in her parental village. During this period if she remarries, her legal husband may claim compensation of bride-wealth from the new husband. Cases of separation are also likewise discussed between the elders of both the villages and the girl is advised to go back to her husband and lead her family life.

#### Bar organisation or Pih Council :

For judicial purposes the Pauri villages are grouped under a wider territorial organisation called, *Bar*. A *Bar* may consist of three or more villages to decide socio-political affairs which cannot be settled at the village level. In *Koirā* and *Borai* areas of *Sundargarh* there are *Tin Khandia Bar* consisting of three villages, *Sar Khandia Bar* having seven villages, *Bamish Khandia Bar* with thirty-two villages under its jurisdiction and other *Bars* like *Modani Bar*, *Majuri Bar*, *Nadr Separi Bar*, etc. The last three *Bars* taken together constitute a still bigger socio-political organisation called *Panchaseghar* (lit. five hundred houses). The *Bar* is also designated as *Pih* and the council held by the *Bar* is thus called *Pih Council*. Each *Pih* or *Bar* has its own tutelary deity worshipped on the occasion of *Pih Jatai Puja*. The village *Jakhā* comes under

*Majuri Bar* and a total number of 20 villages belonging to three (*Majuri, Modani and Nadi Separi*) *Bars* constitute a *Bar* for socio-political and other judicial purposes. *Simerwari* is the presiding deity of the *Bar*.

As has been pointed out earlier serious offences affecting the tribal life, such as violation of incest taboos, adultery, homicide, cases of women dying of labour pain, killing cows and marriage outside the tribe, witchcraft and sorcery of serious nature, disposal of property of hairless Pauri cannot be decided at the village level and are, therefore, referred to the *Pih Council*. The *Pih Council* also meets to readmit the excommunicated persons after performing proper purificatory rites. Circumstances which lead to excommunication of a person is the formation of worms in a wound, admission into hospital for medical treatment and imprisonment in a jail. It may be mentioned that hospitalization and imprisonment are by themselves not causes of outcasting. The real cause for excommunication is eating food from the hands of persons of low castes.

Each *Pih* has its public functionaries who are allotted specific duties to perform when it is in session. The name of the offices and their functions are as follows :

- (i) *Bhal Bhal* : Elderly persons delegated from each village to participate in the deliberations of *Pih* council and offer their opinion in deciding case.
- (ii) *Pih Bhandari* or the barber : He shaves the head of the offender. Ordinarily, Pauri Bhuiyaa do not employ the services of a barber and they shave their own heads. In the past one of the Pauris was employed to act as the barber of the *Pih* council but at present a man of barber caste is employed to act as *Pih Bhandari*. It is believed that shaving by a barber ritually purifies the offender and makes him free from pollution.
- (iii) *Dhoba, Behara* or a washerman by caste : He washes the clothes of the offender on the day of the *Pih* council. Ordinarily the Pauri Bhuiyaa wash their

own clothes, but on occasions like birth, death and *Pish* council the clothes are washed by a washerman for ceremonial purification.

- (iv) *Pish Naek* or *Jat Bahera* : His duty is to perform the purificatory rites by sprinkling diluted cowdung water and cow's urine on the head of the offender. He also eats the first morsel of cooked food touched by the offender.
- (v) *Daf Bahera* : He acts as the treasurer. The fine collected in cash is kept with him to be used during the *Pish* council.
- (vi) *Ghadai* : He is the messenger-cum-errand man whose duty is to inform the date and the place of the *Pish* council to all the villages so that all may assemble on the appointed day. It is also his duty to intimate the date of *Pish Jatai Puja* to all the villagers concerned.
- (vii) *Pish Brahman* : Coming in contact with the non-tribals the *Paul* *Bhuniyas* now seek the services of a Brahmin priest in *Pish* council to purify the offender. After the culprit undergoes the traditional rites and rituals to purify himself the Brahmin burns some ghee to mark the final purification.

The different functionaries of the *Pish* are paid for the services rendered by them. The *Jat Bahera* is considered the highest official by virtue of his social position and his role in the *Pish* council is very significant. His office is honorary. The council of elders coming from different villages (*Bhai Bhai*) also do not get any fixed remuneration but are given a token amount of the money collected as fine from the offenders. The remaining office bearers are paid in cash and or in kind for discharging their duties. The barber and the washerman get each a piece of new cloth and five rupees, with a few measures of husked-rice given extra to the latter towards his food. The *Pish Brahman* is given two pieces of new clothes and two to five rupees. Of all the functionaries the *Ghadai* gets the most. For his services during the *Pish* council and *Pish Jatai*

*Pura* he collects ten *Dai* of paddy and some quantity of pulses from each village of the *Pih* during harvest every year. It shows a patron-client relationship between the *Ghadai* and the *Pauris*.

The *Pih* council is held in the village of the offender. The method of convening the meeting and the procedures followed are as follows. After the case is detected the *Naek* and *Dihari* of the village of the offender first call a meeting and sit down for a preliminary trial of the case. The offender is fined a few measures of husked-rice, some amount of money and a goat. These are kept in the common stock of the village to be used for feeding the *Pih* people on the day of the *Pih* council. The *Naek* then asks the offender to arrange provisions to feed the delegates and the offender is outcasted. He lives in a hut constructed at the outskirts of the village and nobody dines with him, exchanges tobacco or maintains any social relation with him. After the person has arranged the provisions the village *Naek* calls for the *Pih* *Ghadai* and sends the message through him to all the villages of the *Pih* informing the date fixed for the *Pih* council. On the appointed day-delegates from different villages arrive in the village of the outcaste where they are greeted by the women who wash their feet with turmeric water as a token of respect. The delegates in return may present a few coins to the women. The visitors are then given tobacco and smoking leaves and are provided with food which is cooked in a separate hearth. The provisions for this meal is provided by the villagers of the outcaste. After the delegates sit down for arbitration, the *Naek* makes them acquainted with the topic of discussion. The outcaste is called to the spot to express his views. After he begs excuse for the fault, a decision is taken for his restoration to the tribal community. The *Pih* *Bhandari* now sprinkles a few drops of cowdung water on the head of the outcaste, shaves his head and pares his nails. The *Choba* *Behara* washes his clothes. The outcaste then takes a bath and the *Desflee* or the *Pih* *Behara* purifies him by sprinkling some more water in which some cowdung is mixed and a copper-coin is dipped. The outcaste also partakes a few drops of this water. After he is purified in the traditional methods, the *Pih* *Brahmin* burns some ghee

and sprinkles water on him with *Tubi* leaves for final purification. After the purificatory rites are over the concerned person gives about five to seven *Khandi* of husked-rice, one or more goats and some cash for liquor in payment of the fine. With these provisions a big meal is cooked in a common hearth called *Atahakhande* by those who stand as *Banghus* to the offender. After the food is cooked, the *Desmai* offers the cooked-rice and meat curry to the common ancestor facing all the directions. The offender then touches the piles of cooked-rice and pots of meat-curry and the *Desmai* eats the first morsel of food. He then loudly passes his order five times requesting all others to take their meals.

It is only after this declaration that all the delegates eat the food along with the offender. This makes the offender free from all sins and he regains all his normal position in the society. In some Paurl villages readmission to the tribal community is declared only after the offender shares a common tobacco-pipe with the delegates. In one session a *Pih* council may decide a number of cases. An arrangement like this in which a number of cases are clubbed together to be decided on one date in a single session of the *Bar* council saves time of the delegates and minimizes cost incurred on such occasions.

*Pih* council is also held when a Paurl dies without leaving behind any male heir to inherit his property. In such a case a small share of the property of the deceased is given to his married daughters and close agnates and the rest are sold away. The sale proceeds are utilized by the *Bar* Council in a common feast. In the case of adultery the adulter is asked to accept the woman as his co-wife. Incest cases are dealt with utmost severity. The offenders are ostracized from the village and are considered dead and gone. The villagers perform funeral rites for them. A Paurl marrying a Gour girl is duly admitted to the society after paying usual fine to the *Pih* council. If a Paurl girl elopes away with a Gour boy or any other non-tribal her parents may have to face the *Pih* council and pay fine. If the girl changes her mind and wants to remain as a *Bhuiya*, the *Pih* council may restore her membership in the tribal community. However, Paurls marrying in castes



which are considered very lowly by them are permanently out-casted. Cases of homicide are dealt by the Police, but after the offenders are released from jail they may have to face the Pih council for their entry into the tribal community as bonafide members.

### **Pih-Council in Bada Patuli, a case study :**

In the month of Magh (January-February), 1962 the Pih council met in *Bada Patuli* village to decide three cases. The first case was that one Jata Dhuri of village Jaldih was outcasted as his wife died of difficult labour. As this amounted to *Sree Marya* (lit. killing woman) the deceased's husband had to undergo ritual purification. The second one was that one Danci Bhuiya of *Bada Patuli* was going to plough fields with his pair of bullocks. On the way, the bullocks which were tied to the yoke fell in the river. The river was in full spate and the bullocks died. As Danci was responsible for the death of the bullocks he was charged with the offence of killing cow (*Go Marya*). The third one was like that of *Sree Marya* which is referred to in the case No. 1 which occurred in Sarigarh village. All the three cases were difficult to settle at the village level and therefore it was necessary to convene the Pih council.

The *Naeks* of the respective villages referred the cases to the *Deumae*. In order to relieve the outcastes from heavy economic burden of feeding the delegates and to save the time of the delegates the *Deumae* thought it proper to fix a single date for disposing of these cases in a single sitting of the Pih council. The venue for this meeting was fixed at *Bada Patuli*. After the harvest was over, a day in the month of February was fixed and the *Deumae* sent message to all the villages of the concerned Bar and also to some of the villages of Bhuiya Pih of Keonjhar district through the *Ghadai*. Thus several representatives from *Chamakpur Pih*, *Sunderpur Pih* and *Char Naek Pih* of Keonjhar district attended the meeting. Information was sent to the *Pih Bhandari* (Raghu Naek, barber by caste) *Dhoba Bahera* (Rame Parmarik of Patuli, washerman by caste), and *Pih Brahman* (Gokul Naek of Jakesikala).

On the appointed day the delegates from different villages gathered at Sada Patuli and the women of the village greeted them by washing their feet with water. There was nothing controversial to be debated in the council. Every thing was done according to the prescribed procedures. *Pish Bhandari* shaved the heads of the offenders, *Dhola Bahera* washed their clothes, and *Desmae* sprinkled over them some water mixed with cowdung and cowurine including a copper coin dipped in it. After the offenders had taken bath, the *Pish Brahmin* sprinkled *Tubi* water over them to purify them completely.

After the purificatory rituals were over the offenders supplied eight *Khandis* of rice and three goats for the feast. The goats were slaughtered and rice and meat were cooked to feed the delegates. After the food was ready the *Desmae* offered shares of cooked-rice and meat curry to the general ancestral spirits facing all directions. Then the purified offenders touched the heaps of cooked-rice and meat-curry. After taking permission from the *Bhai Bhai* the *Desmae* took the first morsel of food following which others including the ritually cleaned offenders sat down to take food. By this process the offenders were made ritually clean and readmitted into the society.

The barber, washerman and the brahmin were paid their dues which consisted of three pieces of new clothes and three rupees for the barber, the same for the washerman, and three pieces of new clothes and five rupees for the brahmin priest.

An amount of Rs. 35-00 was deposited by the *Naeks* of the villages to which the offenders belonged with the *Dai Bahera* as the treasurer of the *Pish*. This amount was collected by the village councils from the offenders as fines during their preliminary trial of the cases in question. This amount was distributed among the *Bhai Bhai* including those who came from *Kaonjhar* towards their pocket expenses.

With the changing pattern of life, the rigid structures enforced by the tribal council have been relaxed to a great extent. The rules and regulations of the traditional political organisation are not strictly adhered to and the Bhuiyias have become more liberal in their outlook. Two cases of incestuous marriage recorded from village Tantara have not been so seriously viewed. In one case a Bhuiya married a girl of Kutumba (agnate) KHW, and in the other case both the husband and wife hailed from the same KHW and were related to each other as brother and sister prior to their marriage. Normally, such cases would have been considered very serious offences and the offenders would have been driven out of the area and their agnates who lived in the village would have observed death rites thinking the offenders to have died and gone. On inquiry it was, however, revealed that the offenders were found living with others in the village without any ritual stigma and without causing any indignation of the ancestral spirits and other gods and goddesses. The Pauris no doubt consider these offences most serious, but in these cases they just did not bother about them. Tantara village is situated at a stone's throw distance from Tansa town, the centre of Bansan Iron Mines. The villagers of Tantara are in close contact with a multitude of mine workers of heterogeneous caste composition and socio-cultural background. The impact of the mining activities on the people of Tantara has brought about modernization in the life style and value system of the Pauris. Moreover their full-time engagement in mining works as labourers leaves little time to bother about breaches of socio-cultural customs and traditions. People of younger generation who are change-prone are more in number than those of older generation. All these factors have combined to weaken the social fabric and cultural tradition of the Pauris of Tantara village and therefore breaches of social rules and conventions do not concern them much in the changed context.

## CHAPTER X

### SOCIAL CONTROL

The Pauri Bhulnyas lead a sedentary life. Although their swidden cultivation shows periodic shifting from one clearing to the other, but there is nothing of nomadic nature in their settlement pattern. Among the Juangs the settlement is shifted in every 10 or 12 years, alternatively in two sites. But this is not the practice among their Pauri neighbours.

The Pauris have long since given up the parasitic economic base of hunting and food gathering as the primary source of livelihood. Although they are largely slash and burn cultivators, but the productive system in their case has been more systematic now than before. Most of the Pauri Bhulnyas have based their economy on the periodic felling of trees and the cultivation of millets, pulses, maize and vegetables in the clearings. Those living in the valleys have taken to plough cultivation in permanently owned plain lands in addition to shifting cultivation and have been trying to improve their economic condition. In course of transformation from nomadic habits to settled life the Pauris have gradually adopted their life style to the changing techniques of productive system.

The Pauri Bhulnyas live in small villages. Originally the settlements were homogeneous, that is, the households were related by blood to the founder family and belonged to one *Khali*. But with the spread of population the villages located in accessible areas have become heterogeneous in *Khali* composition. When villages were homogeneous, village exogamy was prevalent. But as the composition became heterogeneous marriages within the village could take place. With the change from homogeneity and village exogamy to heterogeneity and village endogamy many changes in interpersonal behavioural pattern and intra village code of conduct have of late surfaced.

Primitive cultivation of crops involve preparation of soil, felling of trees and burning of forest, sowing of seeds, watching and harvesting of crops. These practices force people to stick to one locality.

Moreover, the stores of grain make movements from one place to the other practically impossible. Thus cultivation of crops brings greater stability to the settlements than that foodgathering and hunting do among hunters and collectors. The greater permanency of the local group creates a greater need for social control capable of keeping in check socially disapproved activities and maintaining morals and values, ethos and taboos in the society. The following paragraphs give a discussion of the social control as observed among the Pauri Bhuiyyas of the study villages.

Every Pauri village has a well demarcated boundary within which there are hills, forests, hill streams and valley-lands. The residents of the village may hunt and collect forest produce anywhere within the territory which belongs traditionally to the village. The villagers distribute among themselves according to their requirements the hill-slopes for shifting cultivation. As long as a Pauri cultivates a hill-slope the land and its produce are his undisputed property, but when after two or three years the soil loses its fertility and the swidden allowed to regenerate it also reverts back to the ownership of the village. When after seven to ten years it is again ready for cultivation any one of the village may clear the forest and the previous occupier has no prior right to its utilization.

In the case of the lands situated in the valleys private ownership is recognized. A Pauri who has made a piece of land arable in the valley bottom and has taken to plough cultivation diverts this land to his private use and permanently owns it. However, such individual right in lands which are under settled cultivation does not weaken the solidarity of the village. The main reasons are that wet cultivation in arable lands is a secondary source of livelihood and not all people are privileged to have such lands in their possessions. As against this, shifting cultivation is widespread and universal in the Pauri villages. It is the primary source of living for the Pauris. The common ownership which is associated with land under shifting cultivation serves as the main basis of the village cohesion and continuity.

The cohesiveness is further strengthened by the practice of common ritual activities. All people in a Pauri village join hands to celebrate seasonal festivals and perform sacrificial rites connected with the agricultural cycle. The village astrologer fixes the day and time of all rituals, the priest performs them and the headman mobilises the people and monitors the activities. During certain festivals all adult members of the village observe fast, propitiate the earth-mother and other deities at the village *Darbar*, offer prayer and sacrifices to the village deities for the prosperity of the community as a whole, and at the end enjoy the occasion by feasting, singing and dancing together. On the whole the atmosphere which prevails in the village is entirely egalitarian and community works like an organic whole.

### The Administration of Justice :

The Pauris, like other castes and tribes are subject to the ordinary judicial procedure of the state. Serious crime such as murder, homicide, suicide and theft are dealt with by the local police and judicial courts. But breaches of law of clan exogamy, marriage rules, and minor disputes over women and land, are referred to the traditional village council where the case are adjudicated by the village headman and elders. Any sexual relation with an agnate or with a person of the same *Khat* is considered a serious offence, and the man and woman guilty of such offence are driven out of the village. They are treated as dead and their family members undergo necessary ritual purification by shaving head, pering nails, cleaning houses and clothes, throwing away earthen cooking vessels. Even if the guilty man begs apology for his guilt and expresses before the village council to break off the incestuous intrigue and is willing to bear the cost of feasting the entire village, his request is invariably turned down and he is not excused. The belief among the Pauris is that any lenity shown towards the wrong doers for such offences causes displeasure of the earth-mother and other deities who bring misery and misfortune not only upon the culprits but also to the village. According to the Pauri *Bhainyas* the offences such as incest between agnates are held to be of particular gravity and are not pardonable. The only way of averting the supernatural sanctions from the

offender's kinsmen and his co-villagers is to sever all contacts by driving the guilty persons away from the village for good. The idea of taking such a serious step is largely for self-preservation. But the practice of ostracism serves as a punishment to the offenders as well as a safety device for their agnates and the village community.

Cases of adultery are generally an intervillage affair and the offender is brought to justice by the joint council of elders of concerned villages. At the meeting of the council the two headmen in conjunction with the older men of the two villages discuss the case and in most cases the abductor is ordered to pay a fine in money which is given to the aggrieved husband towards a token refund of his bride-price and marriage expenses. The offender also gives a goat and some rice which are used in a feast for the assembled people of both the concerned villages. Generally cases of adultery and abduction are of rare occurrence and therefore the social sanctions by which such cases are handled do not conform to any set pattern.

### Supernatural Sanctions :

The Pauris believe in many supernatural beings which live in their homes, villages, fields and hills. They appear in dreams and influence human fortunes. They are worshipped and propitiated in festivities and are offered food and drink to appease them. They demand from the Pauris the observance of certain taboos and punish those who break them. For example, if any one eats a mango before the relevant first-fruit offerings have been given to the deities, he suffers from a serious illness or is killed by a tiger.

There are various ways by which the elements of supernatural sanctions come into the picture of social control. A person who has committed some offence but pleads his innocence may take an oath to show that he is not guilty. The mode of taking an oath is by either holding a handful of earth or placing his palm on the ground and calling upon Mother-Earth as witness. Another way is to place the palm on the head of one of his sons. Now a days the guilty person is asked to go to a Siva temple and take oath by touching the garland-

which adorns the deity. The Pauri family believe that a man guilty of perjury, will be killed by a tiger if he takes oath by touching the ground, his son will die if he takes oath by touching the head of his son and he will be bitten by a snake if he takes oath by holding the Lord Śiva's garland. If he speaks truth while taking oath his accusers will come to harm.

One problem which requires examination is that whether or not supernatural forces have any concern about the relations between man and man and whether there is any divine punishment for crime or reward for virtuous behaviour. Though there is no direct link between the human moral conduct and super-human reactions, offences such as clan-incest arouse concern and wrath of the gods in many indirect ways. For example, the Pauris believe that an offence like clan-incest pollutes the earth and residents of the village where it has occurred. Unless the offender is driven away from the village and all contacts with him is severed the deities would not accept any food and drink offered to them in festive occasions and as a result they would cause misery and distress for the villagers. In such a case expulsion of the offender from the village is the only way to wipe out the sources of danger.

### **Merit and Status :**

The Pauris lead a life almost below the level of subsistence. Everybody in the community has to work hard to eke out his living otherwise he has to face starvation. In such a situation to sit idle and become lazy is out of question. It does not mean that all people are equally energetic and industrious. There are successful cultivators and less efficient husbands, more prosperous families and careless cultivators. But the difference between the skilled and unskilled workers is ephemeral and is not expressed and perpetuated in distinctions of material wealth and economic status. Even then those who are lazy and idle are looked down upon by others of the community and such disdainful attitude of the public serves as a corrective to transform



the passivity of the lazy persons to activity. There are several Pauri proverbs which condemn laziness. One of such proverbs is—

*"Askare ke Askari.*

*Daiba Daichi Yetkari"*

It means that the god has united in marriage a lazy man with a lazy woman. The lazy couple feel ashamed when the above proverb is addressed to them and in order to avoid such derogatory references they tend to shake off their idle habits and try to be hard workers.

### Pollution and guilt :

Certain codes of conduct and social customs of the Pauris consciously guard their distinctiveness as a community separate from other communities. Any action which infringes the integrity and prestige of the tribe is severely dealt with. For example, if an unmarried girl is suspected to have sexual relationship with any outsider she is immediately ex-communicated. Such an offence is considered not so serious as the clan-incest is and therefore she can be readmitted into the tribal society provided she pays a fine which is charged on her by the village council and bear the cost of the least of expiation.

When a man returns home after undergoing imprisonment he is kept secluded in a separate hut until he is made ritually clean. The Pauris believe that confinement in a jail is defiling and any person who is imprisoned is ritually polluted. On his return from jail he is kept secluded until he buys his way back to the community by bearing the cost of a feast for the villagers and undergoing the purificatory rites.

A man may become polluted through no fault of his own. One example of this situation is the formation of maggots in an open wound of a person. The man having worms in his wound becomes polluted and is therefore, ex-communicated. When

his wound is cured he undergoes the rituals of purification. On an appointed day the house in which he lives is cleaned and his head is shaved and clothes washed. The earthen cooking vessels are thrown away. He takes bath in the stream and the water mixed with *Tulsi* leaves and cowdung is sprinkled over him to remove pollution. Food is cooked at the stream and all the assembled people of the village including the concerned man eat it on the spot. These rituals and the feast of expiation are believed to wipe out pollution and the man is readmitted into the society.

Other sources of pollution are menstruated women. The shadow of a woman during her menses is defiling and therefore she is forbidden to visit the places where the village deities reside. If by mistake she passes by these places the deities are polluted and necessary rituals are performed to purify them. The people supplicate the deity who is polluted by a sacrificial rite and beg apology and pray that such defiling acts should not be repeated. Any negligence in their performance of necessary rites and rituals of purification is considered not only too hardy but also dangerous to the community. The concerned deity who is polluted by the shadow of menstruated woman appears in dream and particularly the village *Dihuri* sees this dream and becomes aware of the matter. He then reveals it to his covillagers who thereupon take steps to perform the purificatory ceremonies to remove pollution from the concerned deity.

### **Sorcery and Shamanism :**

The ritual life of the Pauris bears imprint of many features of social control and the ritual functionaries like the *Dihuri* (Priest), *Avala* (Shaman) and *Bejoni* (Sorcerer) play a structural role of great significance in day-to-day adjustment and adaptation of Pauri society. Using the idiom of mystical affliction, the priest and the shaman are busy in appeasing the gods and spirits, redressing breach of customary norms and reaffirming values of Pauri society. To meet the need of maintaining the social order and harmony, many calendrical rituals presided over by religious

headman are performed. Similarly, many curative rituals are performed by the shaman who tries to redress natural misfortune, cure illness and neutralize the effects of sorcery and blackmagic. Both the shaman and the sorcerer are able to establish contacts with the supernatural forces. But the former uses such forces for good purposes while the latter for evil purposes. The shaman like the priest strives to gain divine favour for the individual and the community at the time of crisis. But the sorcerer manipulates the agents of affliction through black magic to the detriment of specific individuals. Though blackmagic is frowned upon as a disreputable activity, no one dares to expose the person who performs it. By doing so he fears that he may fall victim to the sorcerer's spells and occult controlling idioms. If anyone thinks that he is the spell of blackmagic he employs a shaman or a more powerful sorcerer to perform counter-magic.

## CHAPTER XI

### HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Nothing is known about the health condition and nutritional status of the Pauri Bhuiyyas as no comprehensive study of this problem has yet been undertaken among this tribe. The present study centres round this problem and its coverage is limited to the Jaldih village. The main objectives of the study are :—

- (1) To assess the health status and disease profile of the tribe;
- (2) To find out their dietary habits and assess the extent of malnutrition among them;
- (3) To get an insight of their belief system regarding diseases, their traditional methods of treatment and attitude towards modern system of medicine; and
- (4) To find out the existing modern health facilities in the village.

#### Methods of Study:

34 Pauri Bhuiyya households comprising 88 males and 92 females were selected for a door to door survey. All the 178 persons were examined physically, clinically and the blood samples were tested for malarial parasite, (*Plasmodium falciparum*), sickle-cell gene and G-6-PD (Glucose-6-Phosphate Dehydrogenase) cell deficiency. The overall nutritional appearance of each case was appraised to find out whether a person is grossly underweight or has generalised skin lesion or other indications of unsatisfactory health, possibly due to nutritional imbalance. Changes in hair, eyes, skin, neck, mouth, teeth, knee and ankle, jerk reflexes, oedema of lower extremities suggesting possible nutritional deficiency were evaluated.

Consumption of food was assessed by taking up a diet survey in which weight of raw uncooked food articles was taken twice daily for seven consecutive days in four selected households.

Data on hygienic sanitation, religious beliefs about health practices, traditional methods of treatment, present health condition and health facilities and medical care available in the village were collected by observation and by interviewing people of the village.

Haematological investigations with special reference to genetic diseases such as sickle-cell disease and red-cell enzyme deficiency (G-6-PD) were carried out with the help of following methods :

- (i) For detection of sickle-cell disease the simple sickling test was conducted using sodium-meta-bisulphite.
- (ii) For detection of G-6-PD-deficiency Brainstins' method was adopted using 2-6-Dichloro-Phenol Indophenol and Phenacin-methasulphate.
- (iii) For detection of malarial parasite thick and thin blood films were taken and examined.

From the study the following health problems have emerged. Like most of the other primitive tribes the knowledge of the Pauri Bhuinyas regarding health and nutrition is rudimentary. Their isolation and backwardness and their faith and reliance on the traditional medico-religious methods are the main reasons for the low degree of awareness about modern medical practices. Other factors which attribute to poor health are the lack of environmental sanitation, poor living condition including improper ventilation and the like. As regards the personal cleanliness they are not so unclean compared to some of the other primitive tribes. Mostly all adults take bath regularly. This may be one of the reasons for the lower incidence of skin diseases among the Pauri Bhuinyas. They brush their teeth with *Saf* twigs and perhaps this may explain why their teeth are in healthy condition. In fact our observation is that the incidence of dental diseases is not significant among the Pauri Bhuinyas of the study village.

**Source, quality and quantity of drinking water :**

There is no well in the village and the people drink water from ponds and hill streams. Water sources are used for more than one purpose. Water of a particular place is used for multi-

farious purposes such as washing clothes, bathing, washing their body after defecation, scrubbing their cattle, cleaning their utensils and also for cooking food and drinking. This explains why water-borne diseases are very common among them.

### Population Composition :

As indicated above the total population of the Pauri Bhuinyas surveyed in the study village comprises 86 males and 92 females. The percentage distribution of population by age and sex is presented in Table No. 9.

TABLE No. 9  
*Distribution of population by age and sex*

Age-group in years	Male	Female	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
0—1 ..	4 ( 2.24)	4 ( 2.24)	8 ( 4.49)
1 1—2 ..	1 ( 0.56)	1 ( 0.56)	2 ( 1.12)
2 1—3 ..	2 ( 1.12)	1 ( 0.56)	3 ( 1.68)
3 1—4 ..	4 ( 2.24)	3 ( 1.68)	7 ( 3.93)
4 1—5 ..	1 ( 0.56)	2 ( 1.12)	3 ( 1.68)
5 1—9 ..	4 ( 2.24)	8 ( 4.49)	12 ( 6.74)
9 1—14 ..	14 ( 7.84)	8 ( 4.49)	22 (12.35)
14 1—24 ..	9 ( 5.05)	15 ( 8.42)	24 (13.48)
24 1—34 ..	10 ( 5.56)	10 ( 5.56)	20 (11.23)
34 1—44 ..	15 ( 8.42)	20 (11.23)	35 (19.66)
44 1—60 ..	15 ( 8.42)	10 ( 5.56)	25 (14.04)
60 + ..	7 ( 3.93)	10 ( 5.56)	17 ( 9.55)
Total ..	86 (48.32)	92 (51.68)	178(100.00)

The study included 57 children (32.02 per cent) under 14 years of age and 17 persons (9.55 per cent) of 60 years old and above. The number of males and females as distributed in different age-groups do not indicate significant variation except in the age-group of 9-14 years where the male population is significantly higher than the female population.

### Health status and Disease profile:

The data regarding the general pattern of diseases prevalent among the Pauri Bhuiyias of Jaldih village is presented in Table No. 10.

TABLE No. 10

*Distribution of major diseases prevalent in different age-groups as per the Health Survey*

Sl. No.	Name of the major group of disease	0-4		4-14	
		M	F	M	F
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	Disease of G. I. Tract ..	8 (3-11)	7 (2-12)	8 (2-33)	11 (4-28)
2	Disease of Respiratory system	4 (1-66)	5 (1-66)	4 (1-55)	5 (2-11)
3	Worm infection ..	1 (0-38)	2 (0-78)	7 (2-12)	8 (2-11)
4	Nutrition disease ..	8 (2-33)	7 (2-72)	10 (3-98)	16 (5-46)
5	E. M. T. disease ..	4 (1-66)	2 (0-78)	3 (1-17)	3 (0-78)
6	Malaria ..	..	1 (0-38)	8 (2-11)	6 (2-12)
7	Cold, cough & influenza ..	3 (1-17)	4 (1-66)	5 (1-66)	8 (2-11)
8	Skin disease ..	..	1 (0-38)	2 (0-78)	1 (0-38)

TABLE No. 10

*Distribution of major diseases prevalent in different age-groups as per the Health Survey—Contd.*

Sl. No.	Name of the major group of disease	14.1—24		24.1—44	
		M	F	M	F
(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1	Disease of G. I. Tract ..	..	8 (1-95)	2 (0-78)	8 (2-11)
2	Disease of Respiratory System ..	1 (0-39)	3 (1-17)	..	3 (1-17)
3	Worm infection ..	..	1 (0-39)	..	2 (0-78)
4	Nutrition disease ..	1 (0-39)	12 (4-65)	..	14 (5-65)
5	E. N. T. disease ..	1 (0-39)	1 (0-39)	..	3 (1-17)
6	Malaria ..	1 (0-39)	5 (1-95)	2 (0-78)	4 (1-65)
7	Cold, cough & influenza ..	1 (0-39)	2 (0-78)	2 (0-78)	1 (0-39)
8	Skin disease ..	..	1 (0-39)	..	1 (0-39)



TABLE No. 10

*Distribution of major diseases prevalent in different age-groups as per the Health Survey—Contd.*

Sl. No.	Name of the major group of disease	45-1-60		60+		Total
		M	F	M	F	
(1)	(2)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
1	Disease of G. I. Tract	1 (0-39)	1 (0-39)	..	3 (1-17)	25 (20-23)
2	Disease of Respiratory System	2 (0-78)	1 (0-39)	1 (0-39)	..	32 (12-65)
3	Worm infection	1 (0-39)	..	..	..	22 (8-66)
4	Nutrition disease	..	1 (0-39)	..	2 (0-78)	69 (28-85)
5	E. M. T. disease	..	1 (0-39)	1 (0-39)	1 (0-39)	17 (8-12)
6	Malaria	1 (0-39)	1 (0-39)	1 (0-39)	1 (0-39)	30 (11-67)
7	Cold, cough & influenza	..	..	2 (0-78)	1 (0-39)	29 (11-39)
8	Skin disease	..	..	..	..	8 (2-33)

The major complaints in order of their frequency are as follows for each group of diseases:—

(1) Diseases of Gastro-intestinal (G. I.) tract.	Dysentery (amoebic and bacillary), diarrhoea, gastritis, colitis, constipation and dyspepsia.
(2) Diseases of Respiratory System	Bronchitis (acute and chronic), asthma and disease of upper respiratory tract.
(3) Worm infections	Hookworm and round worm.
(4) E.N.T. diseases	Tonsillitis, otomphoea, pharyngitis, and otitis media.
(5) Cough, cold and influenza	
(6) Skin diseases	Ring worm and eczema.
(7) Malaria	
(8) Diseases of Nutrition	Vit. 'A' deficiency B <sub>2</sub> deficiency, nutritional anaemias, Vit. 'D' deficiency and others.

The Table No. 10 shows that Gastro-intestinal (G.I) tract diseases are most prevalent and comprise 20.23 per cent of the total diseases. The frequency of dysentery (amebic and bacillary) and diarrhoea is also equally high. Other G.I. tract diseases prevalent in the village are gastritis, colitis, gastro-enteritis and dyspepsia. 11 cases of G.I. tract disease were detected among the female children within the age-group of 4.1 to 14 years.

The common diseases of the respiratory system which were diagnosed in the village were acute bronchitis, chronic bronchitis, asthma and diseases of the upper respiratory tract. 32 cases of respiratory diseases were detected which constitutes 12.45 per cent of the total diseases. The incidence of malaria (*Plasmodium falciparum*) in this village is as high as 11.67 per cent. Worm infestations (round worm and hook worm) constitute 8.56 percent of the total diseases. 29 cases of influenza, cold and cough were observed which constitute 11.29 per cent. The incidence of malnutrition is very high among the children and infants. 38 cases (14.43 per cent) of malnutrition with typical clinical signs (hank nutritional deficiency) were detected in the age-group of 0 to 14 years. Malnutrition causes loss of resistance even in ordinary diseases. Due to undernutrition and malnutrition, diseases of respiratory system and those of ear, nose and throat make their appearance in many cases at frequent intervals. Nutritional anaemias due to iron, folic acid or B<sub>12</sub> deficiency is most common among women of child bearing age. 14 cases (5.06 per cent) of nutritional deficiency anaemia were detected in the age-group of 24.1 to 44 years among the females. No case of nutritional anaemia was detected among the males in the same age-group. The ENT (ear, nose and throat) group of diseases constitute 6.12 per cent of the total diseases. Incidence of splenomegaly and hepatomegaly is high in the village due to malnutrition and prevalence of malaria. Only 6 cases (2.33 per cent) of skin diseases were diagnosed during the Survey. Detailed investigation is necessary to find out the cause of such a lower incidence of skin disease. No cases of filariasis, leprosy, venereal diseases and yaws were detected at the village during the survey.

Similarly no cases of genetic diseases or deficiencies such as haemoglobinopathies, including sickle cell disease (Sickle cell anaemia and sickle cell trait) and red-cell enzyme Glucose-6 Phosphate-Dehydrogenase (G-6-PD) deficiency were detected in the study village. Blood pressure on an average varied between the normal range.

### **Bhuiya Diet :**

The data on the Bhuiya diet are presented in the Table-11 and 12. These tables show that the staple food of the Pauri Bhuiyas is rice which is husked at home with the help of mortar and pestle. The Bhuiyas do not wash the rice before cooking and never throw away the cooked rice water (*Peja*). An adult person eats twice a day and children as many times as the food supply permits. An adult Bhuiya consumes on an average 339 gms. of cereals per day which is 61 gms less than the daily allowance recommended by the I. C. M. R.

Usually they eat rice with salt. Dal and green leaves and vegetables are cooked occasionally. They use oil for cooking vegetables.

As mentioned in earlier chapters the Pauri Bhuiyas practise shifting cultivation and the production of food from this source is scarce and therefore not sufficient for the whole year. To increase the stock they exchange black-gram and mustard for paddy. Millets such as ragi (*Eleusine corocana*), Gangol (*Sorghum vulgare*) and Bajra (*Pennisetum typhoides*) supplement the rice meals alongwith edible roots, tubers and vegetables collected from the forest. Pulses like blackgram (*Phaseolus mungo*) horse gram (*Dolichos biflorus*) Kandula (*Cajanus indicus*) and Masura (*Lens esculenta*) comprise to some extent the dietary stuff of the Bhuiyas. The diet survey shows that the daily intake of the pulses on an average is 28 gms. as against the recommended daily allowance of 85 gms. It shows that the deficiency of pulse is of the order of about 68 per cent.

TABLE No. 11

*Composition of the Average Diet of Pauri Bhuiya compared with the Indian Council of Medical Research (I. C. M. R.) recommended Diet.*

Sl. No.	Food Stuffs	*I.C.M.R. recommended quantity.	Average intake of an adult Pauri Bhuiya	Excess	Deficiency	Percentage
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1	Cereals	.. 400 gms.	338 gms.	..	61 gm.	15.25
2	Pulses	.. 85 gm.	26 gm.	..	57 gm.	67.06
3	Leafy Vegetables	.. 116 gm.	64 gm.	..	52 gm.	44.83
4	Other Vegetables	.. 85 gm.	35 gm.	..	50 gm.	58.82
5	Oils and Fats	.. 38 gm.	5 gm.	..	33 gm.	82.14
6	Milk and milk product	.. 170 gm.	..	..	170 gm.	100
7	Meat, Fish and egg	.. 26 gm.	..	..	26 gm.	100
8	Fruits (and nuts)	.. 57 gm.	..	..	57 gm.	100

\*Apyrod—The Nutritive value of Indian foods and planning of satisfactory diet

TABLE No. 12

*Composition of the Average Diet of Pauri Bhuiya compared with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) recommended Diet*

Sl. No.	Constituents (Nutrients)	*I.C.M.R. recommended quantity	Average intake of an adult Pauri Bhuiya	Excess	Deficiency	Percentage
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1	Protein	.. 70 gm.	37.14 gm.	..	32.86 gm.	47.04
2	Fat	.. 50 gm.	6.62 gm.	..	43.38 gm.	82.36
3	Carbohydrate	.. 440 gm.	376.41 gm.	..	163.59 gm.	37.18
4	Calories	.. 2,600 K.cal	1,312.89 K. cal	..	1,287.11 K.cal	18.7
5	Calcium	.. 0.8 gm.	0.653 gm.	..	0.146 gm.	18.7
6	Phosphorus	.. 1.4 gm.	1.142 gm.	..	0.258 gm	18.43
7	Iron	.. 40 mg.	27.7 mg.	..	12.3 mg.	30.75
8	Vit. 'A'	.. 7,300 IU	2,106.98 IU	..	5,193.04 IU	81.14
9	Vit. B <sub>1</sub> I	.. 1.8 mg.	0.64 mg.	..	1.16 mg.	54.45
10	Vit. 'C'	.. 200 mg.	22.77 mg.	..	177.23 mg.	68.62

\* Apyrod —The Nutritive value of Indian food and the planning of satisfactory diets.

The Pauri Bhuinyas take a lot of green leafy vegetables but infrequently i. e., whenever available. The survey shows that mustard *Sag* (*Brassica campestris* var *satson*) was consumed by all the four sample families. The average daily intake of leafy vegetable came to 64 gms. By the I. C. M. R.'s recommended standard which is 116 gms per day the intake of leafy vegetables shows a deficit of 14.63 per cent. The common vegetables which are used by the Bhuinyas are brinjal, tomato and potatoes. During field work the vegetables which were found to be eaten are pumpkin, onion and bean. The average daily intake of these vegetables is 35 gms. as against 85 gms. which is I. C. M. R.'s recommended daily allowance. The vegetable intake records a deficit of 58.82 per cent.

*Fats and Oils*—All the four households surveyed used oil for cooking purposes in a small quantity. The food survey shows that the consumption of fat and oil was below the recommended level by 82.42 per cent.

*Sugar*—None of the surveyed families did use sugar during survey.

*Meat and flesh foods*—The Bhuinyas are non-vegetarian but the use of mutton or chicken is only restricted to festive and ritual occasions which are limited in number. As none of the families under investigation was found to have eaten meat during the survey it was not possible to estimate the daily intake. Among the Pauri Bhuinya some food items are considered food and acceptable food and some other kinds, however nutritious they may be are rejected on the ground of religious taboo, ignorance and taste. The Bhuinyas were never beef eaters and have given up eating pork even since they have come in contact with the Hindus. They consider the beef and pork ritually unclean food and therefore detesting.

*Fruits*—All kinds of edible fruits available in the habitat and forest. Fruits are eaten by the Pauri Bhuinyas with a special liking for the mangoes and jack fruit. But during the survey none of the four families consumed any type of fruits.

*Milk and milk products*—Milk and milk products do not constitute a major food item in the Bhuinya diet. They think that the milk is for the calves. Moreover milk is not available in sufficient quantity in the Bhuinya village and there is no taboo against taking milk and milk products. During the diet survey milk and milk product was not an item of food in any of the sample families:

### Nutrient Intake :

Constituents of food are very important in order to assess the nutritional status of the individuals. Table No. 12 shows the average daily intake of food constituents per adult Pauri Bhuinya along with the I. C. M. R. recommended standard.

- (1) *Protein*—Whatever protein was consumed by the Bhuinyas during the survey was from the sources of cereals, millets and pulses. The calculation of protein intake shows that the average intake of protein by an adult was 37.14 gms. as compared to the I. C. M. R. recommended standard of 70 gms. indicating a deficiency of 47.04 per cent.
- (2) *Fat*—Pauri Bhuinyas do not use much fat or oil. The average intake of fat is 8.82 gms. The quantity recommended by I. C. M. R. is 50 gms. which means that the Bhuinyas recorded a deficiency of fat intake by 82.36 per cent.
- (3) *Carbohydrates*—The content of carbohydrate in the diet of an adult Bhuinya came on an average to 275.41 gms. per day. The corresponding figure which is recommended by I. C. M. R. is 440 gms. which means that there is a shortage of carbohydrates by 37.18 per cent.

- (4) **Calcium**—The average intake of calcium is 0.65 gms. whereas the recommended daily allowance is 0.8 gms.
- (5) **Phosphorus**—The average daily phosphorus intake is 1.142 gms. which is little less than the recommended daily allowance of 1.4 gms.
- (6) **Iron**—The average intake of iron is 2.7 mgs. which is far less than the recommended daily allowance of 50 mgs.
- (7) **Vitamin 'A'**—Green leafy vegetables provide vitamin A mostly in the form of B-Carotene.
- (8) **Vitamin 'B<sub>1</sub>'**—(Thiamine) Cereals like rice, Gange/ and pulses like black gram provide Thiamine. The average intake of Vitamin B<sub>1</sub> is 0.64 mg. as against the recommended daily allowance of 1.8 mg.
- (9) **Vitamin 'C'** (Ascorbic acid)—Green leafy vegetables provide Vitamin C to the Bhuiyās. The average intake came to 22.77 mg. while the recommended daily allowance is fixed at 200 mg.
- (10) **Calories**—Calorie is a measure of energy supplied by the food intake. The average Pauri Bhuiya diet consists mainly of cereals and pulses which mostly account for their calorie intake. In assessing nutritional status of an individual it is very much essential to find out the calorific requirement and intake. The average calorie intake of an adult Pauri Bhuiya is 1312.69 k. cal and this has been calculated from the diet of the sample families. This value is less by 1187.31 K. cal as per standard from the Calorie recommended by I. C. M. R. which is fixed at 2500. K. cal. The families which were observed and studied showed a calorie deficiency by 47.50 per cent by the ICMR's standard. The analysis of Calorie intake does not include the alcoholic beverages which the Bhuiyās are in the habit of drinking.



The Pauri Bhuiyās are very much addicted to alcoholic drinks. The common drinks are Mohua liquor (*Mahul*), rice beer (*Pabbi*), liquor extracted from date palm (*Toddy*) and from Sago palm (*Salap*) and liquor prepared out of cereals. These alcoholic beverages are taken to get relief from fatigue after hard days work. It was difficult to determine the quantity of beverage consumed by the members of the sample families and therefore the calorie content of beverage has not been taken into account in the calculation of calorie intake. On the whole the diet survey shows that the Bhuiyās are undernourished and malnourished.

The food habit of the Pauri Bhuiyās does not present a monotonous picture. It is rather more varied depending on seasonal variations and availability of food materials. There is no regulated menu for their daily diet. The survey shows that the Pauri Bhuiya diet is nutritionally deficient as per the ICMR standard. It is ill-balanced throughout the year and lacks several essential nutrients. Deficiency in diet is both qualitative and quantitative. Basic calorie requirements are not met. Intake of protein is very marginal while intake of vitamins and minerals, falls far short of the desirable level. There is not enough food and the food gap for the majority of households is considerable. Health conditions under such gross dietary deficiency can never be satisfactory. Morbidity pattern of a community depends mostly upon its nutritional status and on intake of food. The survey in the Bhuiya village shows a high incidence of diseases caused by nutritional deficiency. However, it is very difficult to ascertain and confirm clinically the cases of protein calorie malnutrition (P. C. M.) in adults. But these clinical signs are quite apparent in infancy or childhood. Moreover, insufficiency of one or the other nutrient in smaller quantity, does not necessarily lead to a clinically defined nutritional disease. Symptoms of illness and disease caused by nutritional deficiency is met with in some form or other in the whole population. Among children, malnutrition is a rule rather than an exception. The population surveyed showed physical signs of deficiency of one

or more nutrients to a varying degree with its clinical manifestations. On clinical examinations 69 cases showed one or more signs and symptoms of nutritional deficiency, thus constituting 26.65 per cent of the total diseases. Most common deficiencies observed were :—

- (1) Protein calorie deficiency in the form of Oedema, muscle wasting and moon face.
- (2) Vitamin 'A' (Retinol) deficiency in the form of conjunctival xerosis, keratomalacia and Bitot's spots detected mostly in the age group of 4.1 to 14 years.
- (3) Vitamin B<sub>1</sub> (Thiamine) deficiency with loss of ankle jerks and calf muscle tenderness seen in some cases.
- (4) Vitamin B<sub>2</sub> (Riboflavin) deficiency was found clinically manifested in the form of angular stomatitis, cheilosis, glossitis and magenta tongue.
- (5) Vitamin 'C' (Ascorbic acid) deficiency which was clinically manifested by the presence of spongy gums and petechiae.
- (6) Vitamin 'D' deficiency detected in the form of active rickets in children, healed rickets in children and few adults and Osteomalacia in adults with local skeletal deformities.
- (7) Iron deficiency anaemia in the form of pallor of mucous membrane and koilonychia detected in women of child bearing age.

#### Health culture and magico-religious System of treatment :

The chapter on Religion and social control have covered in detail the religious beliefs and practices including cosmology spirit-world and ritual and magical functionaries and divinets. The most important personnel which concerns us most in the context of health culture, is the *Asafo* who functions as a witch doctor.

The Pauri Bhuiyyas belief in many Gods and Goddesses. Some of them are benevolent and others malevolent. The sorcerers set the evil spirits against persons of their target by means of divination and magical performances and cause illness. There are shamans and witch-doctors who know the techniques of counter acting the evil effects of black magic. A study of both black and white magic reveals the world of information about illness and disease, supernatural agencies causing such illness, machinations of witchcraft, evils, blackmailing deities, and methods of curing illness.

The Pauri Bhuiyyas follow several taboos concerning social and religious life. Any breach of such taboos causes illness and death. There are several guardians of culture and tradition who are in charge of values and social control. These guardians guard against any infringement of social taboos through various mechanisms of social control and try to maintain harmony with the universe. The study of tribal culture indicates that public health is an integral part of the social process in which wants being and function, his body, mind, activity, emotions and social relations are intertwined into an organic whole. Any imbalance in the unity of functions of this whole or any part thereof may result in illness in any of the parts of the configuration. This structural peculiarity of the tribal society is such as any one living in that society would tend to believe that which causes disease is also responsible for failure of crop, menace of tiger, development of maggots in a wound, illluck in hunting and so on and so forth. Briefly speaking the study of Bhuiyya culture reveals that the concepts of health and disease are part of man's view of the universe and his place within it. However things are changing in the Bhuiyya community with considerable rapidity. Though their faith on the medicine man has changed least the Bhuiyyas have shown an inclination towards modern medical practices. During the field work in the village it was apparent that the Bhuiyyas are becoming favourably oriented towards modern medical practices. For example, they wanted to be examined with the help of the stethoscope, get themselves

checked up by blood pressure measuring instrument and also wanted their blood to be taken and examined under the microscope. They attached great curative value to injections (Suk). The difficulty is that no medical facility is now within their easy reach. The nearest Primary Health Centre is located at Korla at a distance of 8 kms. from the village. Thickly wooded lofty hills of Malayagiri mountain range have separated the village from Korla, the nearest urban market centre. This geographical barrier is a disincentive to the doctors and local officers in making visit to this village and keeping contact with the people. Unless a plains man has a strong determination and wish to cover the five hour journey uphill through dense forest on foot it is not possible for him to visit this village even once in his life time.

#### Conclusions and Recommendations:

(1) Gastro-intestinal (G.I.) tract diseases were of common occurrence and the frequency of dysentery and diarrhoea was high.

(2) The other major diseases prevalent were those of the respiratory system, Malaria, ENT group of diseases, worm infestations, influenza, nutritional diseases and skin diseases. However, the incidence of skin diseases was low.

(3) No cases of venereal diseases, yaws, leprosy, tuberculosis and filariasis were detected.

(4) Genetic diseases such as sickle cell disease (Sickle cell anaemia and sickle-cell trait) and G-6-PD deficiency among the surveyed population was absent.

(5) The diet survey indicates that the Bhuleya diet is deficient both in quality and quantity as compared to the accepted standard. Even the basic caloric requirements are not met, let alone other dietary components.

(6) The unsatisfactory food intake is reflected in the wide prevalence of signs of malnutrition. The incidence of malnutrition is very high among the children and infants. In children malnutrition is a rule rather than an exception.

(7) Due to undernutrition and malnutrition, diseases of respiratory system and those of ear, nose and throat make their appearance significantly. Nutritional deficiency anaemia is most common among women of child bearing age.

(8) Nutritional needs should be solved by the community itself through a better utilisation of its own resources i.e., locally available, cheap but nutritious food. Specific objective should therefore, be to test at the village level how locally acceptable and available food can best meet the nutritional needs of vulnerable groups; infants, children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. It is therefore, necessary to analyse the food value of such foodstuffs which are locally available and popularise such nutritious food as to provide a balance diet to the Bhuiyās.

(9) The Pauri Bhuiyās have a strong habit of drinking alcoholic beverages. Before any attempt is made to stop this habit, it is necessary to analyse all types of alcoholic beverages chemically and find out if they contain any nutrients, minerals and vitamins. Any proposal for stopping the habit of drinking should include suggestion of substitute which will supply the same nutrients.

(10) The nature and value of traditional medicinal systems particularly the herbal medicines should be studied, understood and analysed in order to assess their scientific worth and efficacy.

(11) Most of the diseases afflicting the Pauri Bhuiyās of Jaidih village are mainly due to insanitary condition, ignorance and lack of health education. It is necessary that proper health education should be imparted to the people so that they understand the problems in scientific perspective and adopt remedial measure to improve their health.

(12) Many enteric ailments can be eliminated by drinking water from protected sources. It is necessary to dig wells in the village and make the water free from contamination and persuade the people to use water from this source for drinking.

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## AUTHORS

1. Dr. N. Patnaik, M. Sc., Ph. D. Director, Tribal & Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute, Bhubaneswar.
2. Shri S. P. Rout, M. A. .. Research Officer, Tribal & Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute, Bhubaneswar.  
At present working as Research Officer, Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Government of India, Madras.
3. Dr. Almas Ali, M. D., Ph. D. Special Officer (Tribal Health) Tribal & Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute, Bhubaneswar.
4. Smt. K. B. Debi M. A. .. Research Officer, Tribal & Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute, Bhubaneswar.



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